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Blackouts hit Northern California again during fire danger

By JANIE HAR
Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Pacific Gas & Electric turned off electricity Wednesday for about 120,000 people in Northern California to prevent power lines from sparking wildfires during a new bout of windy, warm weather.

The nation's largest utility lowered the number people affected from 375,000 after rain and humidity reduced the fire threat. About 35,000 others were told they could lose power later Wednesday if the weather doesn't improve, PG&E spokeswoman Ari Vanrenen said.

Those who lose power were expected to get it back Thursday. Forecasts called for it to be dry and winds to gust up to 55 mph (89 kph), which could fling tree branches or other debris into power lines, causing sparks that could set catastrophic fires, PG&E officials said. A virtually rainless fall has left brush bone dry.



A shopper looks at extension cords at B&C Ace hardware store, Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2019, in Grass Valley, Calif., in preparation of the planned Pacific Gas & Electric power shutdown scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday.

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Blackouts hit Northern California again during fire danger

Continued from Front

The blackout is the latest in a series of massive outages by PG&E, including one last month that plunged nearly 2.5 million people into darkness and outraged officials and customers as overkill. Officials accused the company of using the blackouts as a crutch after years of failing to update its infrastructure to withstand fire weather. PG&E equipment has caused some of California's most destructive wildfires in recent years. PG&E CEO Andy Vesey acknowledged the outages have been "terribly disruptive" and said the company is taking steps to avoid them in the future but that for now, "we won't roll the dice on public safety." Meanwhile, California regulators are demanding answers from wireless, internet and landline providers whose equipment failed during the earlier outages, leaving hundreds of thousands of people without a way to get emergency alerts or make 911 calls. About 3% of cell towers



Grass Valley's Dionicio Torres looks at the gas can selection before taking the last 5-gallon gas can on the shelves at B&C Ace Home & Garden Center, in Grass Valley, Calif., Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2019, in preparation of Wednesday's planned public safety power shutdown.

statewide failed at one point in late October, but the numbers were much higher in northern counties, such as Marin, which had 57% of its towers out, and Sonoma, with 27% out. Some public safety workers had to drive for an

hour to see if they needed to check in, said John Kennedy of the Rural County Representatives of California. Fire departments lost contact with fire trucks, and some had to rely on radios because download speeds were so slow or out

of service, he said. More than 450,000 people had communications cut off, the group said. Exasperated members of the California Public Utilities Commission reminded representatives of Sprint, AT&T, Verizon and other companies that customers pay for reliable service.

saying the changing outage forecasts made it difficult to prepare. For example, AT&T deployed 60 generators to the San Francisco Bay Area only to learn that the suburbs were no longer affected, said Jeff Luong, an AT&T vice president. "It's impossible to react to that type of situation," he said.

Associated Press

"The customers need to know where there's coverage and where there's not, and the local responders need to know," Commissioner Martha Guzman Aceves said. "Next fire season cannot, cannot look like this one," commission President Marybel Batjer said. Consumer advocates have urged the commission to establish backup power requirements and make the companies provide detailed information about outage locations. State Sen. Steve Glazer and Assemblywoman Rebecca Bauer-Kahan proposed legislation Wednesday that would require cellphone companies to provide at least 72 hours of backup power at cell towers. Verizon, T-Mobile and AT&T officials said they would disclose outage information immediately but didn't commit to 72 hours of backup power. They also criticized PG&E,

commission President Marybel Batjer said. Consumer advocates have urged the commission to establish backup power requirements and make the companies provide detailed information about outage locations. State Sen. Steve Glazer and Assemblywoman Rebecca Bauer-Kahan proposed legislation Wednesday that would require cellphone companies to provide at least 72 hours of backup power at cell towers. Verizon, T-Mobile and AT&T officials said they would disclose outage information immediately but didn't commit to 72 hours of backup power. They also criticized PG&E, saying the changing outage forecasts made it difficult to prepare. For example, AT&T deployed 60 generators to the San Francisco Bay Area only to learn that the suburbs were no longer affected, said Jeff Luong, an AT&T vice president. "It's impossible to react to that type of situation," he said. Lake County Supervisor Moke Simon said AT&T's network went down right away during an outage in late October, risking sewer and alarm systems. There was no backup, he said. "That really put us in a dire-straits situation," he said. Batjer told the companies she was surprised by their lack of preparation given California's long history of wildfires. "It's sort of stunning that you go, 'Well, we just learned a lot in the last three weeks,'" she said. The companies have told the state they communicated with authorities, but the outages were unprecedented. They said they're improving backup power but that those sources might not be possible in some places and generators aren't always safe. Comcast said its network "fundamentally relies on commercial power to operate." □

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Syracuse U says report of supremacist screed was likely hoax

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (AP) — Reports that a white supremacist manifesto was sent to some Syracuse University students' cellphones was likely a hoax, the chancellor said Wednesday while adding that the school fell short in responding to a string of racist incidents.

News of the screed — which authorities had described as an apparent copy of one written by a man accused of killing 51 people at two mosques in New Zealand in March — had been the latest episode to shake the central New York campus this month after a series of bigoted graffiti and verbal slurs.

But authorities haven't been able to find anyone who directly received the manifesto, Chancellor Kent Syverud told the University Senate on Wednesday.

"It was apparent that this rumor was probably a hoax," he said, "but that reality was not communicated clearly and rapidly enough to get ahead of escalating anxiety." A day earlier, authorities said they had gotten reports that the docu-



Peter Fitzgerald from the FBI addresses questions about a series of racist messages and hate crimes that have occurred at SU in the last two weeks during a press conference Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2019, at the Public Safety Building in Syracuse, N.Y.

ment was posted in an online forum and that attempts were made to send it to students' cellphones at the main campus library around 11:30 p.m. Monday via AirDrop. It's a file-sharing service that lets iPhone users send files to iPhones or iPads that are near enough to be within Bluetooth or wi-fi range. Syverud said that because of the late hour, the university wasn't well positioned to address the matter and the wave of alarm that quickly spread on social media. By Tues-

day, city, campus and state police and the FBI were discussing the matter at a news conference.

The campus was already on edge. There have been a dozen instances of racist and anti-Semitic graffiti appearing on or near campus in recent weeks, according to Syverud, who said police believe that five people connected to the university are responsible for the vandalism.

Authorities also have fielded reports of shouted slurs targeting Jews, Asians and

black students at the private university of nearly 23,000 students. About 8% are Hispanic or Latino, 7% are black and 6% are Asian, according to the university website. Syverud on Sunday suspended a fraternity and social events for all fraternities after a black student filed a complaint saying she was verbally harassed by people leaving a fraternity party the night before. Four of the 14 people involved were Syracuse students and have been suspended, Syverud said

Wednesday. He said the rest attend other schools that have been informed of the incident.



Students have staged a sit-in at the Syracuse student wellness center since Nov. 13 with a list of demands that includes the expulsion of students for hate crimes and stronger diversity training for students and staff.

The university's international students also have listed concerns, and about 100 law and medical students marched Wednesday to show support for the protesters, according to Syracuse.com.

Syverud pledged Tuesday to take steps including clarifying the student code of conduct, enhancing security, and investing at least \$1 million in curriculum changes to address diversity.

Facing criticism, Syverud said Wednesday that "there are things that have not been handled well enough during this series of recent events," including the manifesto reports and communication about the early graffiti incidents. □

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Trump's 'Gordon problem' becomes impeachment bombshell

By **LAURIE KELLMAN**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Gordon Sondland couldn't always get President Donald Trump on the phone. Trump now says he barely knows the guy. But for a time, when they did talk, they spoke in naughty words and explicitly discussed pressuring Ukraine to announce investigations.

Was there a quid pro quo? "Yes," Sondland, the central figure in the House's impeachment inquiry, told the world in his testimony Wednesday. What's more, Sondland said repeatedly, "Everyone was in the loop." With that, the president's "Gordon problem" became a bombshell that sprayed the president, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, current and former national security leaders and Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani amid the House's drive to impeach the 45th president.

Sondland's sworn testimony in public and private left some questions unanswered, but he was crystal clear about one thing: If he's going to be blamed for what happened in Ukraine, he's not going quietly. "It wasn't a secret," Sondland said of the president's push to get Ukraine to announce it was investigating the 2016 U.S. election and a gas company linked to Joe Biden. "The leadership at the State Department, the National Security Council and the White House were all informed about the Ukraine efforts."

It was a notable case of transactional Washington relationships going bust under the pressure of scandal. "I don't know him very well. I have not spoken to him much. This is not a man I know well," Trump told reporters at the White House.



Ambassador Gordon Sondland, U.S. Ambassador to the European Union, arrives to testify before the House Intelligence Committee on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2019, during a public impeachment hearing of President Donald Trump's efforts to tie U.S. aid for Ukraine to investigations of his political opponents.

Associated Press

Sondland has served as ambassador since July 2018.

Trump did recall one thing, though, about Sondland: The Oregon hotelier supported other Republicans for president before he donated \$1 million to Trump's inaugural committee and became a "VVIP" for the events.

"He actually supported other candidates. Not me. He came in late," Trump said, as Sondland's testimony stretched across seven hours.

Back on Capitol Hill, Sondland confirmed that the two are not tight.

"It really depends on what you mean by 'know well,'" Sondland said. "We are not close friends, no. We have a professional, cordial working relationship."

Still true or not, Sondland revealed some of the ways their relationship worked amid Trump's pressure campaign on Ukraine.

Trump, he noted, was sometimes in a "bad mood." The president at times told him to "talk to Rudy" about Ukraine. Ultimately, Sondland told a

State Department official, the president didn't really care about Ukraine or the millions of dollars in military aid that were being withheld from the U.S. ally on the border with Russia. He cared about a discredited theory that Ukraine, and not Russia, meddled in the 2016 presidential election.

"Mr. Giuliani's requests were a quid pro quo for arranging a White House visit for President Zelenskyy," Sondland said. Knowing that resistance was futile, Sondland, Energy Secretary Rick Perry and then-special envoy to Ukraine Kurt Volker worked with Giuliani to pressure Ukraine "at the express direction of the president of the United States." On June 26, Sondland called Trump from his cell phone from a restaurant in Kyiv. According to the testimony of other witnesses, Sondland held the phone out for others to hear. Yes, he reassured Trump, the Ukrainian president was willing to do what the U.S. president asked.

"Putting it in Trump-speak by saying 'he loves your ass, he'll do whatever

you want,' meant that he would really work with us on a whole host of issues," Sondland testified. At another point, Sondland said, "That's how President Trump and I communicate, a lot of four-letter words; in this case three letter."

It was one of as many as 20 times Sondland said he has spoken with Trump by telephone. Perhaps a half-dozen of those were about Ukraine, Sondland testified Wednesday. He and other witnesses said that they did not know at the time that Trump's demand to investigate Ukrainian gas company Burisma also meant investigating Biden's son Hunter, who sits on the board.

On one of those times, Sept. 9, Sondland said he picked up the phone and called Trump for what turned out to be a "very short, abrupt conversation."

"I said, 'What do you want from Ukraine?'" Sondland recalled. "He was not in a good mood. And he just said, 'I want nothing. I want nothing. I want no quid pro quo. Tell Zelenskyy to do the

right thing." Sondland also was asked about an account in which presidential adviser Fiona Hill challenged him on his claim to be the one running Ukraine policy. When she asked who said so, he replied, "The president," she testified in closed session.

Actually, Sondland said, it wasn't Trump who gave him the assignment. Rather, then-national security adviser John Bolton and acting White House chief of staff Mick Mulvaney signed off.

"So, by extension, yes, if the national security adviser and the chief of staff approve your remit, it really is coming from the president," Sondland said.

Hill is scheduled to testify publicly Thursday.

As Hill navigated Sondland's moves, she at one point referred to the shadow Ukraine policy as Trump's "Gordon problem," according to a colleague. "That's what my wife calls me. Maybe they're talking," Sondland quipped during the hearing. "Should I be worried?" □



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Boston overhauling pot review process to close race gap

By PHILIP MARCELO
Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Boston is overhauling its process of reviewing marijuana businesses to boost involvement of minority entrepreneurs in Massachusetts' burgeoning pot industry.

The City Council on Wednesday approved an ordinance calling for the creation of an independent Cannabis Board to oversee local review of prospective marijuana businesses.

The proposal by Councilor Kim Janey also requires Boston to ensure that at least half of its marijuana licenses go to companies from communities affected by the war on drugs.

And it creates Massachusetts' first local fund supporting minority-owned marijuana companies, according to Janey and other city officials.

Boston's new Equity Fund will provide qualified business technical assistance. It will be financed through local industry fees.

Janey said the goal of the overhaul is to make Bos-

ton's "opaque and vague" marijuana business application process more transparent.

She said it also provides "economic justice" to marginalized communities that have suffered for years under harsh drug enforcement policies and have so far not benefited from the lucrative legal pot industry.

"The evidence is clear: without intentional focus on equity, the status quo will prevail," Janey said as the council weighed her proposal. "Larger and wealthier companies will lock out smaller, diverse companies from our communities."

Activists across the country have complained that black and Latino business owners have struggled to break into the legal marijuana trade, often because of prior, drug-related criminal records.

Since Massachusetts voters approved recreational marijuana use and sales in 2016, more than 200 licenses have been issued statewide, according to the state Cannabis Control

Commission. Only 10 are considered owned by minorities or disadvantaged populations.

Massachusetts' first two retail pot shops opened their doors Nov. 20, 2018, in Northampton and Leicester. One year later, there are 33 stores operating statewide, but none is in Boston.

Boston's ordinance sets a national standard for local vetting of prospective marijuana businesses, suggested Shaleen Title, a member of Massachusetts' Cannabis Control Commission that issues the state licenses required for opening a marijuana business.

"There's transparency, there are criteria that are fair, there are people in charge who are accountable for making those decisions, and there's financial assistance available," she said after observing Wednesday's vote in City Hall. "Those four things create a model that other cities and towns should look to."

Democratic Mayor Marty Walsh, whose office over-



In this March 25, 2018 file photo, a convention visitor examines a marijuana sample at the New England Cannabis Convention in Boston.

Associated Press

sees the marijuana review process, commended Janey for her efforts and said he'll sign the measure into law. He's also expected to issue an executive order creating the cannabis oversight board in the coming days.

"Together, we will ensure those who have been impacted hardest by the War on Drugs can benefit most from this new economic opportunity," he said in a statement.

"Since the start of this new industry, we have worked to ensure the process is fair, transparent and equitable for all who wish to partici-

pate in it."

The proposed overhaul also comes as federal prosecutors are investigating local corruption in Massachusetts' cannabis industry. A federal grand jury has issued subpoenas to communities across the state, including Boston, seeking information about their compensation agreements with marijuana companies. U.S. Attorney Andrew Lelling and others have voiced concern about the potential for abuse in the negotiation process between communities and companies, which is largely done out of public view. □

Arizona border activist acquitted of harboring immigrants

By ASTRID GALVAN
Associated Press

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — An activist was quickly acquitted Wednesday on charges he illegally harbored two Central American immigrants at a camp in southern Arizona operated by a humanitarian group.

The verdict by a jury in U.S. District Court came after jurors deliberated for about two hours in what was the second trial for Scott Warren. A mistrial was declared last June after a jury deadlocked

on harboring charges. The jury's quick decision came in contrast to Warren's last trial, when jurors deliberated for several days before calling it quits over a lack of consensus.

Greg Kuykendall, an attorney who defended Warren, said the new jury followed the law carefully.

"They parsed the evidence," he said. "They paid rapt attention while we were putting on our defense and while the prosecution was putting on its case, and they decided that humanitarian

aid is not always a crime, the way the government wanted it to be."

Warren, 37, testified that neutrality guides his work near the border and denied he has ever helped migrants hide or instructed them how to avoid authorities.

Warren was arrested in January 2018 by U.S. agents who were staking out a humanitarian aid station in Arizona known as "The Barn," where two Central American men had been staying for several days. □



Scott Warren celebrates his verdict outside the Federal Courthouse outside the Federal Courthouse, Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2019 in Tucson, Ariz.

Associated Press

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SEALs face review following death of Islamic State militant

By **JULIE WATSON** and **LO-LITA BALDOR**

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Navy officials on Wednesday notified a SEAL convicted of posing with a dead Islamic State militant and three of his superior officers during a 2017 deployment to Iraq that all four will face a review to determine if they should remain on the elite force.

Attorneys for Chief Petty Officer Edward Gallagher said the Navy is trying to remove his Trident pin, designating him as a SEAL, in retaliation for President Donald Trump's decision last week to restore his rank. Gallagher was acquitted last summer of a murder charge in the stabbing death of the militant captive, but a military jury convicted him of posing with the corpse while in Iraq in 2017. He also was acquitted of attempted murder for allegedly shooting at civilians.

His lawyers said Wednesday they have filed a complaint with the inspector general's accusing Rear Adm. Collin Green of insubordination for defying Trump's actions and asking for an investigation into the Navy's handling of the Gallagher's case. Green is



In this Tuesday, July 2, 2019, file photo, Navy Special Operations Chief Edward Gallagher leaves a military court on Naval Base San Diego.

the Naval Special Warfare commander.

It was the latest twist in what has been a tumultuous case that has shaken the secretive SEAL community and revealed rifts within its ranks after SEALs testified against one of their own. The case was dogged from the start with the Navy's lead prosecutor being removed in the middle of the court-martial after it was discovered the prosecution was tracking the defense team's emails. Trump restored Gallagher's rank on Friday after he was demoted from chief following his conviction. "What the bureaucracy is doing to him now is pure and simple retaliation," said Marc Mukasey, one of Gallagher's lawyers.

Two U.S. officials familiar

with the case but not authorized to speak publicly disputed that and said discussions about convening a review board began shortly after Gallagher's conviction in July.

Eugene Fidell, who teaches military justice at Yale Law School, said he's not surprised the Navy would call for a review. "I think this would have happened anyway to a SEAL with a court-martial conviction," he said. In a letter from Green, obtained by The Associated Press, Gallagher was notified that a peer-review board has been instructed to determine whether he should remain a SEAL. The five-person board will convene Dec. 2 behind closed doors. It will include one SEAL officer and four senior enlisted

SEALs, according to the two U.S. officials. Gallagher can appear once before the board on Dec. 4 but without his lawyers. He can dispute the evidence given to the board that will include his conviction and call witnesses. He also can appeal the final decision that will be made by the Naval Personnel Board, which will take into account Green's input and the board's recommendations.

Green also notified three SEAL officers who oversaw Gallagher during the deployment — Lt. Cmdr. Robert Breisch, Lt. Jacob Portier and Lt. Thomas MacNeil, according to the officials. Removing their Trident pins means they will no longer be SEALs but could remain in the Navy, though Portier and Gallagher were al-

ready planning on leaving the service. Still it would be considered a mark on their career that they were cast out of the prestigious force. The Navy has revoked 154 Trident pins since 2011.

The other three officers will go before three-person boards. Attorneys for Breisch and MacNeil could not be immediately reached for comment.

According to Portier's letter, his review board has been instructed to specifically look at Portier's 2017 deployment in Iraq and his actions through July 2019 to see if he "displayed a gross lack of professional or personal judgment, lack of moral or ethical behavior and/or conduct inconsistent with the SEAL ethos."

Portier was Gallagher's platoon commander and was charged with failing to report the alleged murder. He denied the charges and they were dropped after the jury acquitted Gallagher of murder.

His attorney, Jeremiah Sullivan said Trump recognizes "the honorable sacrifices that my client has made in his combat deployments," and that Green is challenging the "integrity of the president."

Naval Special Warfare spokeswoman, Capt. Tamar Lawrence, said in a statement that Green "remains focused on delivering a capable, ready, and lethal maritime special operations force in support of national security objectives, which includes assessing the suitability of any member of his force via administrative processes." □

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Ex-Houston officers face federal charges in deadly drug raid

By JUAN A. LOZANO
Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Two former Houston police officers are facing federal charges accusing them of providing false information in a January drug raid that left two people dead and several officers injured, authorities said Wednesday.

The federal counts follow state charges filed in the case in August, including two counts of felony murder against one of the officers. Rhogena Nicholas, 58, and Dennis Tuttle, 59, were killed in the raid.

Federal authorities said the charges against Gerald Goines, 55, and Steven Bryant, 45, are the result of a civil rights investigation begun by the FBI following the botched Jan. 28 raid. Police alleged Goines lied to obtain a search warrant.

Goines, who was shot in the botched drug raid, and Bryant face charges in a nine-count indictment. They made their initial federal court appearances Wednesday afternoon.

Prosecutors asked that Goines be held without bond. He will remain in custody until a detention hearing on Friday.

"We are looking forward to vigorously defending Mr. Goines both in state court and in federal court," said Nicole DeBorde, Goines' attorney. She said Goines was expected to plead not guilty.

Bryant, who was granted a \$50,000 unsecured bond, pleaded not guilty.

Derek Hollingsworth, one of Bryant's attorneys, said the ex-officer is "worried" and that the federal charges "were unexpected."

Goines was charged with seven counts, including two charges in which he is accused of depriving the couple of their constitutional right to be secure against unreasonable searches. Prosecutors allege the search warrant Goines prepared contained false statements and led to the raid, which resulted in the couple's deaths and injuries to officers.

Bryant faces one count re-



Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo speaks during a press conference at HPD headquarters on Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2019, in Houston.

lated to obstructing justice by falsifying records. He's accused of falsely claiming in a report after the raid that he had identified as heroin a substance that was bought at the home before the raid.

Authorities allege Goines lied in the search warrant about having a confidential informant buy heroin at the home. Goines later acknowledged there was no informant and that he bought the drugs himself, authorities said.

Patricia Garcia, a neighbor of the slain couple, is accused of making fake 911 calls that led police to the home. She is facing one count of providing false information.

Federal prosecutors allege Garcia made several calls claiming her daughter was inside the couple's home, that the couple were drug addicts, drug dealers and had guns inside their house. Family and friends of Tuttle and Nicholas have continuously dismissed allegations that the couple sold drugs. Police found small amounts of marijuana and cocaine in the house, but no heroin.

"We hope the Nicholas family's quest for justice

in the death of Rhogena will be expedited by the FBI's actions today," said Michael Doyle, one of the Nicholas family attorneys who has been conducting an independent investigation of the raid. "The federal indictments confirm the breadth and depth of the lies told to justify the raid before and after the death of Rhogena Nicholas."

Garcia, who also made her initial court appearance Wednesday, was expected to remain in custody until a detention hearing Friday. During Wednesday's hearing, she asked for a court-appointed lawyer who was not immediately named.

Authorities have not revealed why Garcia made the 911 calls. Police said Garcia lived on the same street as Nicholas and Tuttle. DeBorde did not immediately know if Goines knew Garcia.

Despite the federal charges that allege the two ex-officers provided false information that was used to justify the raid, Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo on Wednesday maintained that officers had a reason to be in the house.

Acevedo said his agency has made changes to

its procedures to ensure something like this doesn't happen again.

"We cannot change what happened. We can't go back in time. But we have an absolute duty to pursue the truth, pursue the facts," Acevedo said at a news conference.

Goines faces up to life in prison if convicted of the most serious charges related to depriving the couple of their constitutional right to be secure against unreasonable searches. Bryant faces up to 20 years in prison while Garcia faces up to five years if they're convicted.

Following the shooting, prosecutors began reviewing more than 2,000 cases tied to Goines and Bryant. In June, prosecutors said their investigation had grown into a probe of 14,000 cases handled by the Houston Police Department's narcotics division.

Both Goines and Bryant were relieved of duty after the shooting and later retired.

In state court, Goines is facing two felony murder counts while Bryant is charged with tampering with a government record. □

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UK Conservatives under fire for Twitter deception in debate

By **DANICA KIRKA**
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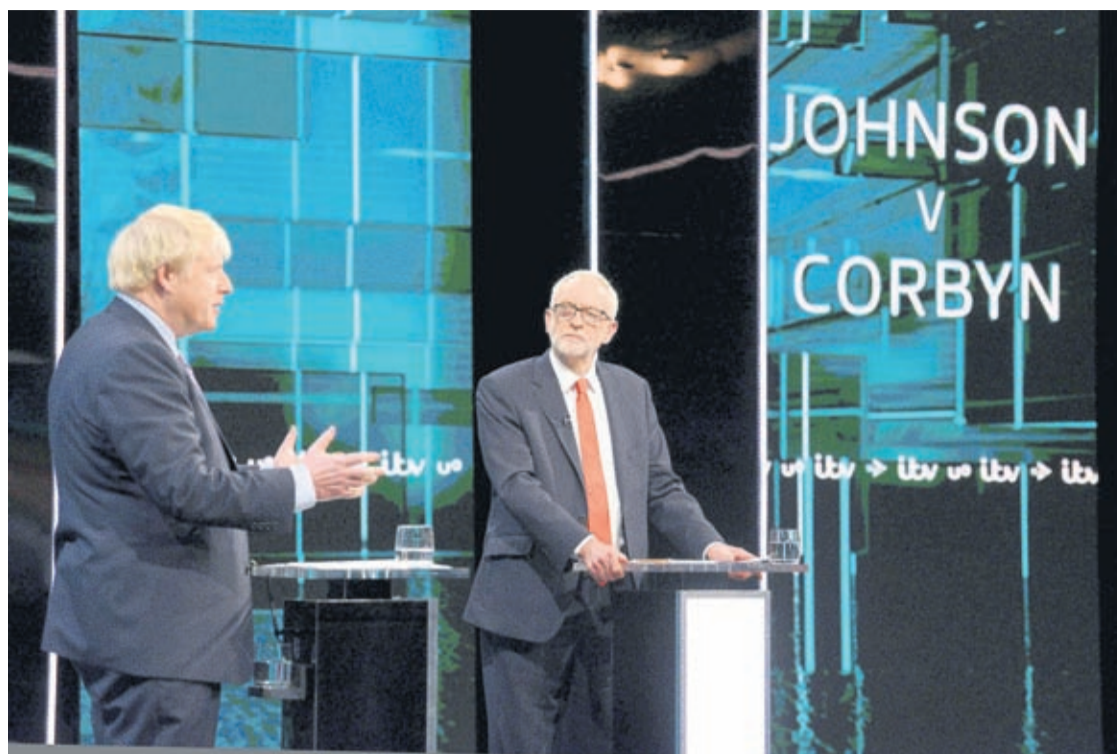
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain's Conservative Party was accused Wednesday of trying to deceive voters by changing the name of its press office Twitter account to "factcheckUK" during a televised election debate, raising concerns that political parties' online trickery is undermining democracy. Rebranding its account to resemble a neutral fact-checker, complete with a big check mark, the party posted tweets supporting Prime Minister Boris Johnson during his debate with opposition Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn. It later reverted to the name "CCHQ Press" and restored the party logo to its profile. Organizations that combat political misinformation cried foul.

"It was misleading and it was inappropriate," Will Moy, chief executive of the London-based fact-checking website Full Fact, told The Associated Press. "It's not what we can see a serious political party doing." Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab defended the party's actions, saying the Twitter account was clearly linked to the Conservatives and asserting that voters would not be perturbed by "the social media cut and thrust."

"We make no apology for having an instant rebuttal to all the nonsense and lies put out," Raab told the BBC.

Twitter said in a statement



In this photo issued by ITV, Jeremy Corbyn, right, and Boris Johnson, during the election head-to-head debate live on TV, in Salford, Manchester, England, Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2019.

that it had "global rules in place that prohibit behavior that can mislead people." The company pledged to take "decisive corrective action" if there were any more attempts "to mislead people by editing verified profile information," but did not censure the Tories for their account switch.

The manipulation of the account during a high-profile event put the rise of digital campaigning squarely in the public eye. All political parties are devoting much of their campaign spending to the digital realm as they battle to win the U.K.'s Dec. 12 election, bypassing strict laws that govern communication on radio and television.

Despite parliamentary re-

ports urging new regulations to combat misinformation or regulate the way digital ads target voters, British officials have made no significant changes to laws governing online ads, social media and election disinformation.

In a reflection of the confusion, the Electoral Commission, which regulates campaign finances, issued a statement warning that "voters are entitled to transparency and integrity from campaigners in the lead-up to an election." Critically, however, it pointed out that it doesn't have "a role in regulating election campaign content."

With the absence of law, campaigns have been pushing the boundaries to get attention.

The Conservative Party was embroiled in controversy earlier this month when it posted a video on social media containing a misleading edit of a television interview with senior Labour figure Keir Starmer. The video had been altered to show Starmer failing to answer a question about Brexit when, in fact, he responded quickly. The Conservative Party chairman described the doctored video as lighthearted satire.

The Conservative Party is trying to raise its online game in this election after being outperformed by Labour during the last campaign in 2017, when the opposition party exceeded expectations and the Tories stumbled.

The Conservatives have hired New Zealanders Sean Topham and Ben Guerin to oversee digital strategy and Australian Isaac Levido as overall campaign director. All three have worked with Lynton Crosby, an Australian political strategist who has long ties with the U.K. Conservatives.

The trio have been credited with helping Australia's Liberal Prime Minister Scott Morrison pull off a surprise election victory in May, partly with high-volume, emotion-tweaking social media activity.

"The particular emotions that we need to unlock are arousal emotions, we're talking anger, excitement, pride, fear," Guerin told a center-right political conference after the election.

He said winning "the battle of the thumbs" required frequent posts and varied means — videos, memes and more — to drive home the same core message.

"It's an arms race for who can dominate the news feed," he said.

In their first TV debate of the election on Tuesday, Johnson and Corbyn attacked each other's policies on Brexit, health care and the economy.

But the debate likely failed to answer the question that has dogged the campaign: Who can voters trust? The two leaders sidestepped tricky questions about their own policies in the hour-long encounter and drew derisive laughter from the studio audience at several points. □

In first since 2002, EU not forcing any states to cut debt



European Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs Pierre Moscovici talks to journalists during a news conference at the European Commission headquarters in Brussels, Thursday, Nov. 7, 2019.

Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — For the first

time since 2002, the European Commission is not taking

legal action against any of its members over high budget deficits or debt, and is instead encouraging some to spend more to help the economy.

The EU's executive arm said Wednesday that eight countries were at risk of significantly falling short of the bloc's aim for a deficit below 3% of GDP and debt approaching 60%.

They include Spain, France, Belgium and Italy, which it said have not sufficiently used good economic times

to repair their public finances.

"This is worrying because very high debt levels limit the capacity to respond to economic shocks and market pressures," said Valdis Dombrovskis, the commission vice president.

However, the commission isn't taking legal action to push any countries to tighten finances. It most recently did that against Italy, whose last government had increased spending sharply despite its huge

debts. The commission encouraged countries with strong finances, particularly Germany and the Netherlands, to spend more. With growth slowing, experts say governments need to invest more.

The European Central Bank has pressed that point repeatedly.

It unveiled a new stimulus package in September but says it can only do so much to help the economy and needs governments to help as well. □

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Malta arrests exec, apparently linked to journalist slaying

Associated Press

VALLETTA, Malta (AP) — Maltese authorities arrested a prominent businessman Wednesday who appears to be a "person of interest" in the assassination of a prominent investigative reporter on the Mediterranean island.

Yorgen Fenech was on a yacht heading north from Malta that was intercepted by the Maltese military early Wednesday and forced back to port.

In remarks to reporters, Prime Minister Joseph Muscat did not directly tie the arrest to the slaying of 53-year-old Daphne Caruana Galizia in a powerful car bomb in October 2017. But he did say that it appeared to result from comments he made a day earlier on the possibility of a pardon for an alleged middleman who had offered to identify the mastermind of the killing.

"If I had not given these instructions, maybe today



Police aboard the yacht "Gio" after it was intercepted on a course for Sicily by the Maltese military early Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2019, and forced back to Portomaso, Malta.

we might be speaking of persons of interest who might have escaped," Muscat told reporters.

He declined to comment further out of concern that any comments might preju-

dice a case.

The slain journalist's three sons were more direct in their comments on Twitter, making a link between the arrest and their mother's assassination.

Associated Press

The prime minister said no politician is tied to Caruana Galizia's murder, but her sons have said the arrested businessman is tied to Muscat's chief of staff and a former energy minister.

In Parliament later, Muscat said he was willing to put himself under the scrutiny of lawmakers and answer questions once the investigations were concluded.

"I will not abdicate, I will shoulder my responsibility," he said.

No details of the charges against Fenech have been revealed. Authorities have 48 hours to decide how to proceed. On Wednesday evening, protesters gathered in front of Muscat's office for a demonstration.

They carried placards with photos of Caruana Galizia and messages calling for resignations. A banner placed across the main door of the premier's office read "No to corruption."

Fenech is a prominent hotelier and director of the Maltese power company. His name appeared in the Panama Papers three years ago — millions of leaked documents that shed light on how the rich hide their money. □

French government to boost funding for public hospitals

By SYLVIE CORBET

Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The French government says it will boost funding for the country's public hospitals, in an effort to end months of protests by doctors and nurses and as more demonstrations and strikes are expected next month over the planned overhaul of the pension system.

The emergency plan unveiled Wednesday will grant public hospitals an additional 1.5 billion euros (\$1.6 billion) over the next three years, after years of cost cuts.

The plan includes an annual bonus of 800 euros (\$885) for about 40,000 caretakers and nurses with modest salaries living in the Paris region. Public hospitals across France will also get a financial package allowing them to grant employees a bonus of up to 300 euros (\$332). The plan follows a series of protests since March, including a big demonstration last week in Paris involving exasperated nurses, doctors and other public hospital workers.

"We have heard their anger. We have heard they are exhausted. We have

heard their dismay," Prime Minister Edouard Philippe said. The French state will also take over a third of the public hospital debt, which amounts to around 30 billion euros (\$33.2 billion). Some unions said the plan was too modest to bring France's often-praised health care system back to high-level standards.

Several unions — including SNCF rail workers, Paris subway conductors and Air France crews — have called for a nationwide strike on Dec. 5. They fear the changes will lower pensions and delay the retire-



Medical staff hold a poster reading "Save Public Hospitals" during a national demonstration Thursday, Nov. 14, 2019 in Paris.

Associated Press

ment age. Others, including unions, joined the movement this week. □

UN Security Council members rebuke US on Israel settlements

By EDITH M. LEDERER

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — In a sharp rebuke to the Trump administration, the 14 other U.N. Security Council members on Wednesday strongly opposed the U.S. announcement that it no longer considers Israeli settlements to be a violation of international law.

They warned that the new American policy undermines a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The council's monthly Middle East meeting, just two days after U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's announcement, was dominated by negative reaction to the new American policy from countries representing all regions of the world who said all Israeli settlements are illegal under international law.

Only Israel's U.N. ambassador, Danny Danon, who is not a council member, spoke in support of the U.S. action, saying it "rights a historical wrong." He also called the criticism an "obstacle to peace" that is "preventing direct negotiations" between Israelis and Palestinians.

"When the international community tries to force its solutions, it achieves the opposite effect," Danon said. "When Palestinians



The UN Security Council holds a meeting on the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2019 at United Nations headquarters.

see that their battles are being fought for them, why would they agree to come to the negotiating table where they would have to compromise?"

Before the meeting began, five European allies of the United States — Britain, France, Germany, Belgium and Poland — reiterated in a joint statement that "all settlement activity is illegal under international law."

The Europeans called on Israel "to end all settlement activity, in line with its obligations as an occupying power," saying such activ-

ity "erodes the viability of the two-state solution and the prospects for a lasting peace."

They also reiterated concern "about the calls for a possible annexation of areas in the West Bank." Nickolay Mladenov, the U.N. special coordinator for the Middle East peace process, opened the meeting expressing "regret" at the U.S. action and reiterating the U.N. position that settlements under a December 2016 council resolution "are a flagrant violation under international law."

He also warned that the situation in Gaza remains "highly volatile" after "the most serious recent escalation between Israel and Palestinian militants" that followed Israel's targeted killing of a Palestinian Islamic Jihad commander.

Cherith Norman Chalet, a deputy U.S. ambassador, repeated Pompeo's announcement on settlements, which repudiated a 1978 State Department legal opinion holding that civilian settlements in the occupied territories are "inconsistent with interna-

tional law." She stressed that "this complex political problem" can be resolved only through direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

"The U.S. government is expressing no view on the particular legal status of any individual settlement, nor are we addressing or prejudging the ultimate status of the West Bank — that is for Israelis and Palestinians to decide," Chalet said.

Indonesian Ambassador Dian Triansyah Djani, whose country has the world's largest Muslim population, called the U.S. announcement "irresponsible and provocative," saying it "incontrovertibly constitutes a de facto annexation and is a barrier to peace efforts based on the two-state solution."

When that session ended, ambassadors from the 10 non-permanent council members who serve two-year terms stood before reporters while Deputy German Ambassador Jurgen Shultz read a critical joint statement.

"Israeli settlement activities are illegal, erode the viability of the two-state solution and undermine the prospect for a just, lasting and comprehensive peace" as affirmed by the 2016 council resolution, the statement said. □

Son of former German president stabbed to death in Berlin

By KIRSTEN GRIESHABER

Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — The son of former German president Richard von Weizsaecker was stabbed to death while he was giving a lecture at a hospital in Berlin where he worked as a head physician, police said Wednesday.

A 57-year-old German man is in custody after he jumped up from the audience at the Schlosspark-Klinik and attacked Fritz von Weizsaecker with a knife on Tuesday evening.

An off-duty police officer in the audience who tried to stop the attack was seriously wounded and had to undergo surgery.



In this Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2010 photo a man is arrested by the police at a hospital in Berlin, Germany.

Von Weizsaecker died at the scene despite immediate attention from colleagues. "We cannot yet say anything about the at-

tacker's motive," said police spokesman Michael Gassen.

Police said later that the man, who was not a patient

at the hospital, had been questioned overnight. Police were also investigating if von Weizsaecker or his family had received threats in the past.

The 59-year-old was the son of one of Germany's most esteemed presidents. Richard von Weizsaecker became West Germany's head of state in 1984 and when the country was unified, became the first president of the new nation, serving until 1994. He died in 2015.

Fritz von Weizsaecker was one of the ex-president's four children. His sister Beatrice posted a picture of Jesus on the cross on Instagram after the killing of

her brother. Christian Lindner, the head of the Free Democrats party, of which Fritz von Weizsaecker was a member, expressed shock at the murder. The board of Berlin's Charite hospital said they were "deeply shocked by the violent death of the highly regarded friend and colleague. Our thoughts are with his family and the colleagues at Schlosspark-Klinik." Von Weizsaecker studied and worked at several hospitals in Germany and abroad, including the Harvard Medical School in Boston and a hospital in Zurich, Switzerland. His fields of expertise were internal medicine and gastroenterology. □

Thai court removes pro-democracy politician from Parliament

By TASSANEE VEJPONGSA
GRANT PECK

Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — Thailand's Constitutional Court ruled Wednesday that a popular pro-democracy opposition leader violated election laws and cannot keep his seat in Parliament. The court said Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit, the 40-year-old head of the new Future Forward Party, violated a regulation barring owners of media companies from running for Parliament. The court rejected Thanathorn's claim that he sold his holding in a media production company before the deadline needed to be a candidate.

The ruling had been expected. Thanathorn's party, which finished third in a March general election, has been a thorn in the side of Thailand's conservative establishment, in whose favor the courts have consistently ruled. The party is disliked by the establishment not only for its anti-military stance, but also because of its strong popularity.

There are many other cases pending against Thanathorn and his party, and there is a widespread belief that the deck is stacked against it and it will end up being disbanded, with its leaders banned from political office for several years. The ruling against Thanathorn automatically triggers further deliberation by



Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit leader of the anti-military Future Forward Party gestures as he leaves Constitutional Court in Bangkok, Thailand, Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2019.

the court into whether he knowingly flouted the rules, and he could face a ban on public office if found guilty.

About 100 fervent supporters mobbed Thanathorn as he arrived for the court hearing and gave him an even more enthusiastic reception on his way out.

"We shouldn't be concerned. It's important for us to continue on our campaigns and there are so many things that we have to work on," Thanathorn told reporters after the ruling. "We should be focusing on what really benefits people. The public can decide for themselves whether or not what happened

to us is just."

Thanathorn was never allowed to take his seat in the lower house of Parliament because of the Election Commission's preliminary finding that he had violated the law. According to an initial court ruling, he was suspended because he could be guilty as charged, which would be an "obstruction to the important work in the meetings in the House of Representatives."

However, the court did not suspend 32 members of Parliament from the coalition formed by the pro-military Palang Pracharath Party who faced similar complaints. It said those

cases had not been filed and processed by an investigative committee.

On Monday, Thanathorn raised the issue again, announcing he was suing the Election Commission's members because they had acted improperly by forwarding his case to the Constitutional Court before it was adequately investigated. Thanathorn had announced before the ruling that he would continue to be active politically no matter what the verdict, and he went from the court to a shopping area where he took part in campaigning for public support for his party's policy to end military conscription.

Associated Press

The party also is pushing an effort to amend the constitution to make it more democratic. Thailand was under the rule of a military junta from 2014 until earlier this year, and that government pushed through a new constitution to give more power to the military and the courts and senior bureaucrats at the expense of elected office holders. Thanathorn, a billionaire whose family fortune comes from the auto parts industry, founded his party in March 2018 as Thailand was heading toward an election. The party's initial support came from youth and young professionals, but it proved to have wider appeal in many parts of the country.

The army staged coups in 2006 and 2014 to attempt to shore up the old ruling class led by a royalist-military alliance.

The ruling class's power was challenged by the rise of billionaire populist Thaksin Shinawatra, whose 2006 ouster by the military set off a long and sometimes violent power struggle between his supporters and opponents.

Prayuth Chan-ocha, who staged the 2014 coup and afterward served as prime minister in the military government, took a second term this year after the Palang Pracharath Party formed a coalition after the election. □

Esper accuses China of intimidating smaller Asian nations

By ROBERT BURNS

Associated Press

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) — U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper on Wednesday accused China of using coercion and intimidation against smaller Asian nations to impose its will in the South China Sea.

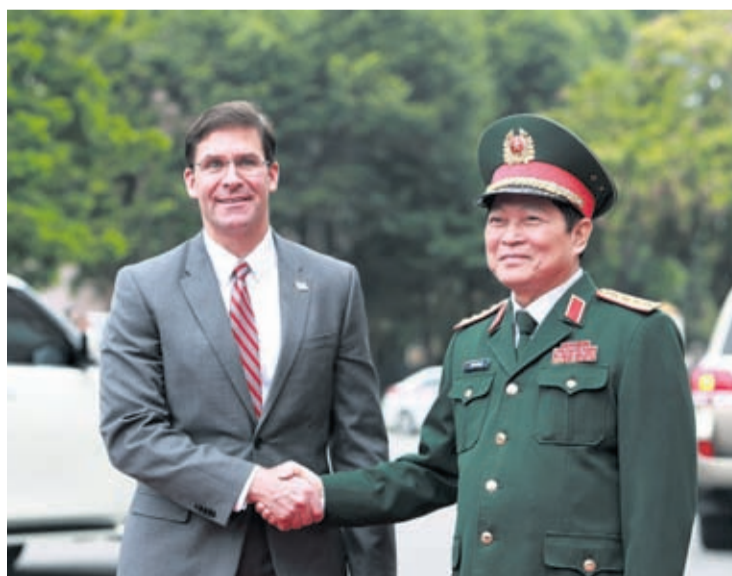
He urged Vietnam and others in the region to push back.

"We will not accept attempts to assert unlawful maritime claims at the expense of law-abiding nations," Esper said in a speech to the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam, a government university.

Vietnam is one of the region's most vocal critics of China's sweeping territorial claims in the South China Sea and has accused Beijing of encroaching into its waters.

"The United States firmly opposes intimidation by any claimant to assert its territorial or maritime claims, and we call for an end to the bullying and unlawful activities," Esper said.

Later, in remarks at Vietnam's Communist Party headquarters, Esper said, "We strongly oppose violations of international law by China and excessive claims in the South China Sea."



U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper, left, and Vietnamese Defense Minister Ngo Xuan Lich shake hands in Hanoi, Vietnam Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2019.

Associated Press

As part of a long-term effort to forge closer relations with Vietnam, Esper announced that the U.S. will provide Vietnam's coast guard with a surplus American ship. He said it would be provided next year, but he gave no details on payment or exact timing.

Esper met with several top government officials and paid a visit to the city's Hoa Lo prison, dubbed the "Hanoi Hilton" by American servicemen held there during the Vietnam War.

The late Sen. John McCain was held there after he was shot down in his Navy jet over Hanoi in 1967. □

Many in Venezuela's 2nd city turn to prayer, not politics

By **SCOTT SMITH**

Associated Press

MARACAIBO, Venezuela (AP) — Thanks to the generosity of neighbors, Hayde Chacin and husband Jose Calderón are surviving their elderly years on the outskirts of Venezuela's second largest city of Maracaibo.

The manager of a nursery down the street gives them a bit of rice when they have nothing else to eat. The night watchman at a restaurant across the street runs a hose every other day to their house to fill up buckets of water.

Neighborhood trash heaps provide discarded plastic bottles that they cash in for pennies and wood to burn for cooking on an open fire in the backyard. They complain government social programs fall short.

"The two of us live in poverty — but we're proud," said 60-year-old Chacin.

The couple focuses on daily survival, accepting their hard lot even as Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaidó pushes for street protests in his protracted campaign to oust President Nicolás Maduro.

Few in Maracaibo have responded to Guaidó's efforts to reignite his movement, despite it being a city hard hit by crisis. Its residents endure daily power outages in a region that's punishingly hot.

Vast oil reserves pumped from Lake Maracaibo once made Venezuela one of Latin America's wealthiest nations. Critics blame two



In this Nov. 18, 2019 photo, faithful referred to as "Servidores Mañaneros" or morning servers, carry the image of the Virgin of Chiquinquirá during a procession, in Maracaibo, Venezuela.

decades of socialist rule for destroying an oil industry that today produces a fraction of what it did at its height two decades ago. The Venezuelan government blames U.S. sanctions for many of its problems. Some banks of the lake are constantly covered in a slick of spilled oil from the broken platforms, making it hard for local fisherman to make a living. The smell of crude wafts into a city with more than 1 million residents.

Thousands of Venezuelans flocking to Maracaibo's ornate basilica each year at this time traditionally ask for help overcoming illness or conceiving a child. But many faithful say the economic crisis driving the exodus of millions has made them ask for something bigger than themselves.

"I've come here to pray for Venezuela, asking for a miracle much larger, that they help all Venezuelans escape this crisis," said 36-year-old worshipper Jessica Araujo. She became emotional while talking about her husband's departure to Colombia four months ago with the promise to send home money to his wife and their two young children.

So far, no money has come, she said. Worshipers launched the holiday season with a ceremony on Monday that drew masses, even as the crisis strains budgets and breaks up families. They

gathered around the Virgin of Chiquinquirá, one of Venezuela's most revered Catholic icons. Nationwide, an estimated 4.5 million residents have fled Venezuela, most going to nearby Colombia, Peru and Ecuador. They search for better jobs to send money home, but they often confront backlash and hardships as their numbers steadily grow.

Guaidó in January declared presidential powers, vowing to end socialist rule, but his attempts have stalled, despite backing from more than 50 nations, including the United States, which has targeted Maduro's government with far-reaching sanctions aimed at forcing him out.

Maduro has not budged from power.

In Maracaibo, located in Venezuela's western Zulia state along the Colombian border, many residents say they've abandoned political marches, lacking faith in leaders or fearing for their personal safety.

Araujo, 36, said she couldn't join the demonstration, having to care for her two young children, ages three and four. Her husband left for Colombia, promising to send back money from selling street food, but he calls her only to report difficulty making a living, she said.

She's thin and continuing to lose weight, living on \$5 or \$10 that friends occasionally send her from abroad. "With this, I'm surviving," she said. "There are so many hungry children in the streets."

Maracaibo residents on Monday held a celebration opening the holiday season, but the faithful continued to fill the pews the next day. They quietly bowed their heads, many saying they reflected on their family members and friends driven far away by the crisis.

Johan Bolivar, 31, sells vegetables nearby at the city's largest open-air market. He said vendors like him have begun packaging small bags of vegetables, called "combos," made up of a single tomato, onion and potato. It's a cheap for customers who can't afford large quantities of produce, he said. □

Death toll in violence at Bolivian fuel plant rises to 8



Soldiers guard the Senkata fuel plant in El Alto, on the outskirts of La Paz, Bolivia, Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2019.

Associated Press

By **CARLOS VALDEZ**

Associated Press

LA PAZ, Bolivia (AP) — The death toll from an operation by Bolivian security forces to clear the blockade of a fuel plant by anti-government protesters has risen to at least eight, officials said Wednesday.

The public defender's office and the state Institute of Forensic Investigations announced the casualty figures, a day after the violence in the city of El Alto, near La Paz. People gathering at a Catholic church

to mourn the dead said they were fired on by security forces.

Police and soldiers escorted gasoline tankers from the Senkata fuel plant following food and gasoline shortages in some Bolivian cities.

The plant provides fuel to more than two million people in El Alto and neighboring La Paz.

Bolivia has been in a state of turbulence since a disputed Oct. 20 vote that, according to an international audit, was marred by irreg-

ularities. Former President Evo Morales resigned Nov. 10 after protests against him and pressure from the security forces, but his supporters oppose the interim government that took his place.

Jeanine Áñez, the self-proclaimed president, said Wednesday that she planned to call for new elections following the deaths of at least 30 people in political violence since last month.

"We want the violence to stop," Áñez said. □

LOCAL



Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino hosts a classic Thanksgiving Dinner

PALM BEACH — The culinary team of Hilton Aruba Resort is preparing a veritable Thanksgiving feast for a great price. Dinner may be enjoyed outdoor on the wrap-around terrace overlooking the waterfalls, or in the air-conditioned dining room.

On the menu, plentiful and tasty offerings, all equally fresh and tempting.

For appetizer the choice includes Pumpkin Soup with Caribbean Lobster, Pancetta, Fresh Thyme, or the Steakhouse Wedge, with Bacon, Roma tomatoes, Gorgonzola chunks, Blue cheese dressing.

For main course, the culinary brigade prepared a combination platter of Roasted Vermont Turkey and Glazed Virginia Ham, with Sausage Sage Stuffing, Turkey Gravy, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Baby Vegetables or Grilled Salmon, Forbidden Rice, Charred Brussels Sprouts, Bacon.

To conclude the lovely meal Thanksgiving Dessert Trio features three all-American favorites with Mini Pumpkin Cheesecake spiced Chantilly Cream, Old Fashioned Apple Pie, and Southern Pecan Pie.

The Sunset Grille sommelier has carefully selected a number of wines by the glass to pair with the food, Seven Falls Chardonnay, Chateau Ste Michelle Riesling, H3 Horse Heaven Hills Merlot and Seven Falls Cabernet Sauvignon.

Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino wishes guests a Happy Thanksgiving, saluting locals, first timers and repeat visitors in gratitude for their patronage, since 1959.

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Culture and Public Policy for Sustainable Development

ORANJESTAD — This week is an important week for cultural officials, policy makers, researchers, professionals and entrepreneurs all over the world. On November 19th 2019 within the Forum of Ministers of Culture, at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, the “Culture | 2030 indicators” was officially introduced. The Culture | 2030 indicators is a framework of thematic indicators whose purpose is to measure and monitor the progress of culture’s enabling contribution to the national and local implementation of the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The cultural sector now has its own tools for effective implementation and stern monitoring with the vision of reinforcing the global cultural sector with sustainable targets. Ministers from all over the world were invited to be present and to establish the roadmap for the cultural sector within the SDG 2030 agenda. From the Dutch Kingdom, we took notice of the presence of the Minister of Culture of Curaçao who also shared a few words in the general assembly, emphasizing on the need for more participation of associate members of UN in decision-making and leadership locally and internationally.

Considering the ongoing global exchanges, UNESCO is aiming to strengthen its multidisciplinary scope and addressing the issue of sustainable development in an inclusive approach by emphasizing the synergies between culture and social, economic and environmental issues. Since 2015, the 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development has been developing a

common and diverse roadmap for sustainable development. The conclusion since then is that culture is at the heart of this vision, which is based on a project of more inclusive and resilient societies.

Forum of Ministers of Culture 2019

On 19 November 2019, UNESCO hosted the Forum of Ministers of Culture, a major event to discuss the central place of culture in public policies around the world and its impact on sustainable development. Even though Aruba’s Minister of Culture was absent, the Plenipotentiary Minister of Aruba and the Minister of Education, Science and Sustainable Development of Aruba together with more than 140 Ministers and high representatives were present to mark a high point during

the 40th session of the General Conference of UNESCO. Interestingly, UNESCO, the only United Nations agency for culture, is returning to the tradition of ministerial meetings in the field of culture, 21 years after the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development held in Stockholm, Sweden in 1998.

Continuing this new platform for priority setting and public policy development, this ministerial forum was an opportunity to make decisive progress on the role of culture in development and effective policy making thereof. There were four prominent themes that constructed the dialogue during the forum, which are: 1. Culture and heritage, a renewable energy for dialogue and peace; 2. Culture at the heart of education, a fundamental dimension for human development and innovation; 3. Investing in culture and creativity for sustainable development and employment; 4. Culture in the public space, a driving force for urban and social transformation. With no doubt it can be concluded that internationally culture is continuously being recognized as a vital component of sustainable development related to general economic growth of countries and social well-being of our communities. Aruba, within the vision of it becoming an innovative island of solutions in the Caribbean, we cannot afford to stay behind any longer. Culture, creativity, innovation are all interconnected and with effective policymaking can bring Aruba to the next level. As the Prime Minister of New Zealand recently expressed: countries need to stop talking about targets and start focusing on action.

THEMATIC INDICATORS FOR CULTURE IN THE 2030 AGENDA



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Culture and Public Policy for Sustainable Development

Continued from Page 14

The Culture | 2030 Framework

The Culture|2030 indicators is a framework consisting of thematic indicators that intend to measure and monitor the progress of culture's enabling contribution to the national and local implementation of the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, both as a sector of activity, and transversally across other sectors. In short, this means that Aruba can use this framework to measure the contribution of culture in the implementation of the SDGs. It reaches out extensively to all economic, social, infrastructural and environmental horizons within a country. The Culture|2030 Indi-

cators combine a variety of data, including quantitative and qualitative indicators, and will rely as much as possible on existing data sources within a society. All data collected in Aruba will contribute to the formation of a global overview of the state of progress of the contribution of culture to the 2030 Agenda and also within the Caribbean region.

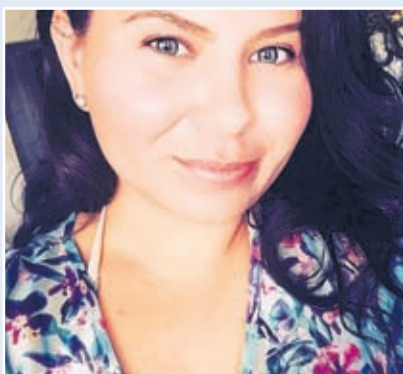
The framework is divided into four dimensions (sections), which include: environment and resilience; prosperity and livelihoods; knowledge and skills; and inclusion and participation. Each section is further clustered in sub group themes, which are related to the SDG targets. This overview of the cultural

thematic overview is the exact example of how culture, creativity, and knowledge can foster innovation, or the fact that the creative industry in synergy with the knowledge economy can stimulate innovation in societies. This report can serve so much information and tools for government officials, government institutions, local NGOs, education institutions, academic institutions, community organizations, and the overall civil society, on how to draft grant proposals, policy reports, project proposals and research projects.

The "Creative Islander" and the Culture | 2030 Framework

The main purpose of the Creative Islander is to in a critical way com-

municate, inform, and raise awareness on the importance of creativity, culture, knowledge for innovation and sustainable development. By doing this we start the dialogue and provide fact-based evidence on global and regional developments on these topics, so that together we can make a difference in our community. In the coming months the Creative Islander will break down the Culture| 2030 framework into smaller pieces according to the four dimensions. Special attention will be drawn to how Aruba can use current best practices to solidify this new shift in the cultural sector. So, stay tuned for more dialogue on how culture can accelerate innovative sustainable development on Aruba. □



Biography - Thaïs G. Franken (24) is a recently graduated Aruban student at the University of Maastricht (UM). She obtained her graduate double master of science degree in Public Policy and Human Development in collaboration with the United Nations University Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT). Back home, on the beautiful island of Aruba, she completed her Bachelor of Arts in Organization, Governance & Management (OGM) at the University of Aruba (UA), where she successfully defended her thesis titled "Placing Culture and Creativity at the Heart of the Aruban Sustainable Development". It was precisely this research project that inspired the emergence of the "Creative Islander" column in 2018. Thaïs is very passionate about topics such as sustainability, innovation, culture, creativity, social entrepreneurship and their role in public management. Next to her academic interests, she enjoys reading, writing, dancing and cooking.

Everyday heroes on the Road

ORANJESTAD — Workers of different first aid departments of Aruba came together and dressed up as Superheroes to surprise kids around the island on International Children's Day.

Workers from the Emergency Room of the IMSAN, Ambulance, Fire department and Police Department dressed up as Superheroes and drove around the island visiting different



schools. They were surrounded by children who couldn't believe their superheroes just shake hands with them or gave them a high-five. The Children were delighted with this great idea. You could see

the joy and happiness on their faces when seeing their superheroes. This Superheroes parade referred to our everyday heroes.

All men and women of each and every one of

these departments that risk their lives and give their utmost during any situation to save lives.

Thank you Superheroes you are definitely a true inspiration for all of us! □

Don't miss the 'Mini Town' Christmas Lighting event



BALASHI – What does a small house, a lighthouse, a candy shop and toys have to do with an utility company? Find out this Friday November 22nd, 2019.

The National Water Distribution Plant of Aruba (WEB ARUBA NV) will be inaugurating their mini lighted Christmas town at the main entrance of WEB in Balashi to mark the start of this wonderful season.

Christmas lighting is a part of our culture and therefore it is a season that is very much appreciated by the entire community. This year a group of employees at WEB decided to light up the place and they choose the theme 'Mini Town' in the concept of a village. Lots of colorful lights and Christmas ornaments were used to build this village. Children will be able to sit in the Santa's sleigh and take pictures.

The event starts at 7:30 PM at the Main Gate of WEB ARUBA NV in Balashi. Musical group 'Grupo di Betico' will be performing their Christmas repertoire. WEB ARUBA NV would like to invite the entire community of Aruba and its visitors to be part of this wonderful event. Enjoy a Christmas night 'Aruban Style'. □

Silver and Coral celebration for loyal visitors



ORANJESTAD — Recently, Kimberley Richardson of the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to honor Aruba's loyal and friendly visitors as Goodwill Ambassadors and Emerald Ambassadors of Aruba. The Goodwill Ambassador certificate is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba 20 years and more consecutively. The Emerald Ambassador certificate is presented to guests who visit Aruba 35 years and more consecutively.

The honorees were: **Frank Dibitto** and **Theresa Shields** honored as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba.

Barry and Lynn Goldberg received the honorary title of Emerald Ambassadors of Aruba. The Emerald Ambassador is the highest certificate presented and is given to visitors who have

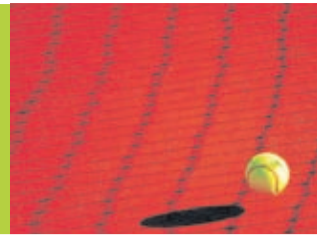
been visiting Aruba 35 years or more consecutively.

The ceremony was one of a kind because honoring visitors who have been coming to Aruba for over 35 years is incredibly rare and it was a very memorable moment for all of us.

This lovely group of people stated that they love the island very much, especially for its year-round sunny weather, nice sandy beaches and picturesque sunsets, delicious variety of foods, its cleanliness, and Aruba's warm and friendly people whom became like family to them.

Richardson together with the representatives of the Renaissance Ocean Suites presented the certificates to the honorees, handed over some presents and also thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home-away-from-home. □

SPORTS



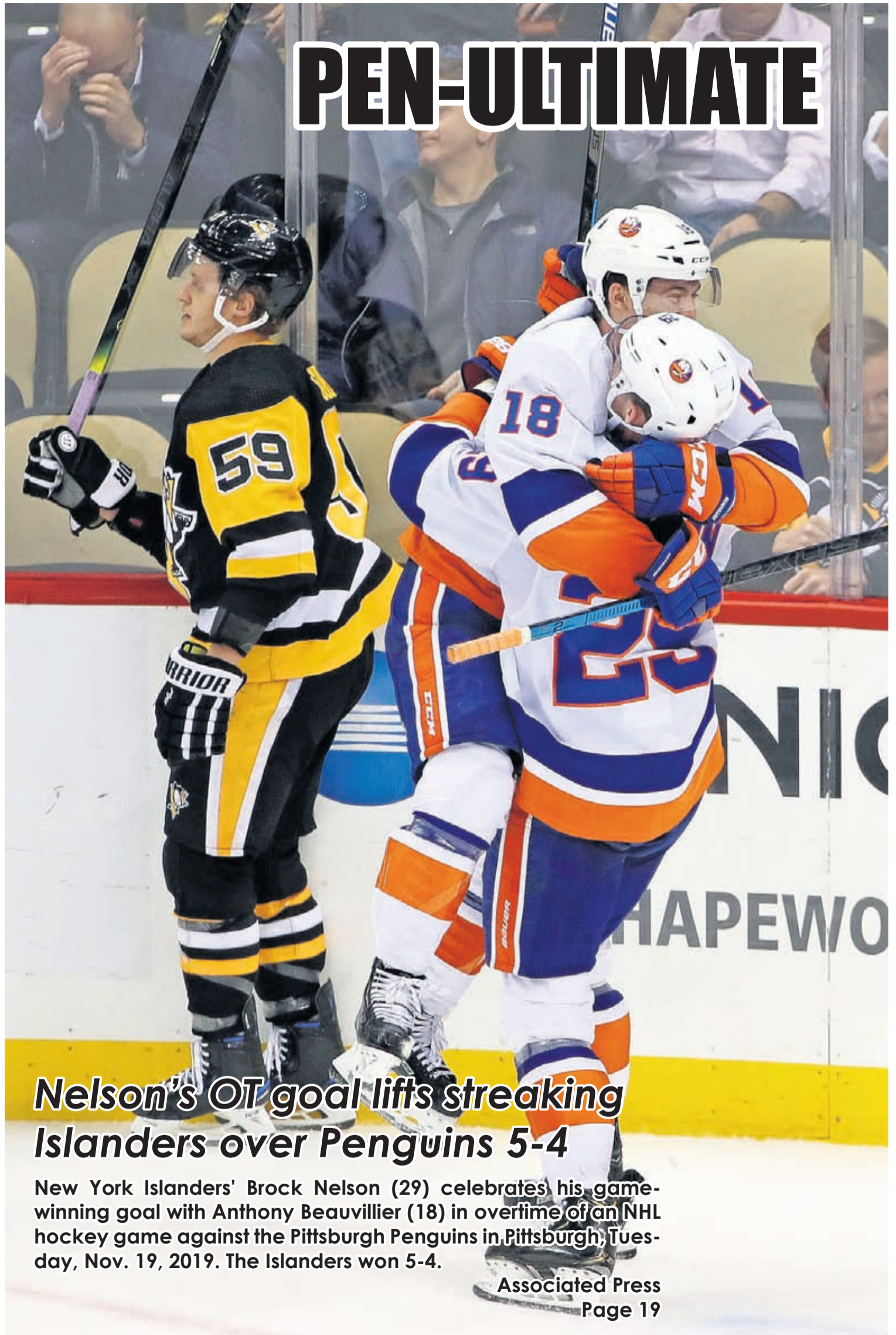
Cleveland Browns star defensive end Myles Garrett leaves an office building in New York, Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2019. Associated Press

Browns' Garrett attends appeal hearing for NFL suspension

By TOM WITHERS
AP Sports Writer
CLEVELAND (AP) — Myles Garrett looked composed and casual, a stark contrast to the last time he was seen in public. Stylishly dressed in a bright blue suit and black turtleneck, the Cleveland Browns' star defensive end met Wednesday with an appeals officer in New York in hopes of getting a reduction to an indefinite NFL suspension that has temporarily ended Garrett's season and tarnished his career. Garrett was banned last week for the rest of the regular season and playoffs, if Cleveland makes them, for striking Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Mason Rudolph with a helmet. Garrett appealed and his case was heard by league-appointed officer James Thrash, a former NFL player, who will either lessen the penalty or put a definitive number of games on it.

Continued on Page 21

PEN-ULTIMATE



Nelson's OT goal lifts streaking Islanders over Penguins 5-4

New York Islanders' Brock Nelson (29) celebrates his game-winning goal with Anthony Beauvillier (18) in overtime of an NHL hockey game against the Pittsburgh Penguins in Pittsburgh, Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2019. The Islanders won 5-4.

Associated Press
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LPGA finale a sprint toward a \$1.5M prize

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP Golf Writer

NAPLES, Fla. (AP) — Jin Young Ko won twice as many tournaments as anyone else on the LPGA Tour this year. Her four victories included two majors. Her dominance was so thorough that she wrapped up the points-based award as player of the year with three tournaments remaining.

And with \$1.5 million available to the winner in the season finale, none of that matters.

The CME Group Tour Championship is a free-for-all involving the richest payout in women's golf. All that was required was getting to Tiburon Golf Club as one of the 60 players in the Race to CME Globe, in which points were accrued over 31 tournaments dating to January.

Start on Thursday, it's a sprint. That's fine for Ko, provided "sprint" is merely a figure of speech.

The 24-year-old South Korean was playing in Taiwan three weeks ago when she felt a tug in her left ankle. She couldn't swing. She asked the other players to play ahead of her to give it some time, and she managed to hit her shot. But then it hurt walking. Midway through the third round, she

withdrew. A cortisone shot, ice every night, some rest, and now she's in Florida trying to put a proper end to a sensational year.

"Still worried a little bit," Ko said. "Hopefully getting better, but then this week is the last, so it will be fine."

It's a conclusion unlike any other in the LPGA Tour.

The tour abandoned the format of resetting the points to give only the top 12 players a shot at winning the Race to CME Globe and its \$1 million bonus, a reward for having played the best golf all year.

The objective this year was to qualify for the Tour Championship. Ko has the same chance at the \$1.5 million check as Stacy Lewis, who finished 60th in the points standings and otherwise would have taken the rest of the year off to heal a rib injury in her lower back.

And because the money is official, any of the top 10 players who win have a mathematical chance to capture the season money title. Ko was so good this year that she is \$721,791 ahead of Jeongeun Lee6 on the money list. Any other year, and Ko already would have wrapped up the money title.

Just not this one. And she's OK with that.

"That is really great motiva-



In this Thursday, April 4, 2019 file photo, Lexi Thompson hits her tee shot on the second hole during the first round of the LPGA Tour ANA Inspiration golf tournament at Mission Hills Country Club in Rancho Mirage, Calif. Thompson has gone five years since her only major title.

Associated Press

tion to me, so I will keep trying harder," she said.

It should be easier to follow. A year ago, Lexi Thompson won the tournament and the \$500,000 in official money, while Ariya Jutanugarn won the Race to CME Globe and the \$1 million bonus. The year before that, the roles were reversed — Jutanugarn won the tournament, Thompson won the points race.

Brooke Henderson wasn't a big fan of the new concept when she first heard about it. "I had worked so hard the last few years to be in those top positions to have a chance at winning the big money," said Henderson, who is No. 2 in the standings with two victories this year. "But at the end of the

day, I think it's great for golf to see the purses increase, and to have an opportunity like this is unlike any other event we've ever played." The \$1.5 million prize represents more than Thompson has won all year.

Ko, meanwhile, is still going to collect her share of awards this week as part of the season-ending celebration. She already was presented a \$100,000 bonus for having the most top-10 finishes (12 in 21 events), winning a tiebreaker because of her four victories. She will get the Rolex LPGA Player of the Year award Thursday night at the awards dinner, along with the Annika Major Award for having the best record in the majors this year. Barring

a collapse, she will win the Vare Trophy for the lowest scoring average.

And she still has the inside track to the LPGA money title. That requires the most work because everyone starts from scratch and so many players are lined up behind her in the standings if Ko falters.

A third-place finish still would be enough for Ko to become the first woman to make \$3 million in a season. Nelly Korda, one of seven players with multiple victories this year, summed up the chase for the \$1.5 million prize in the simplest of terms. "To win this tournament, you have to play good golf," Korda said. "At the end of the day, whoever wins deserves it." □



In this Aug. 25, 2019, file photo, Brooks Koepka hits from the second tee during the final round of the Tour Championship golf tournament at East Lake Golf Club in Atlanta.

Associated Press

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP Golf Writer

Brooks Koepka's knee injury is bad enough that he

withdrew from the Presidents Cup three weeks before it begins.

Koepka, the No. 1 player

Koepka withdraws from Presidents Cup, replaced by Fowler

in the world who led all qualifiers for the American team, said Wednesday the injury he suffered Oct. 18 at the CJ Cup in South Korea is not recovering well enough for him to complete Dec. 12-15 at Royal Melbourne in Australia. U.S. captain Tiger Woods replaced him with Rickie Fowler.

"I consider it to be a high honor to be part of the 2019 team and I regret not being able to compete," Koepka said in a statement. "Since my in-

jury in Korea, I have been in constant contact with Tiger and assured him that I was making every effort to be 100% in time for the Presidents Cup in Australia. However, I need more time to heal."

Koepka was coming off a season in which he won three times, including a second straight PGA Championship, and had runner-up finishes in the Masters and U.S. Open. When he started the new season in October at Las Vegas, he revealed he

had stem cell treatment on his left patella the day after the Tour Championship because his knee had been bothering him over the last five months of the season. Two weeks later, he was walking down a slope off the tee at the par-5 third hole in the second round of the CJ Cup when his right foot hit a wet piece of concrete and he landed hard on his left knee for support. He shot 75 and withdrew after the round, returning to Florida for treatment. □

Nelson's OT goal lifts streaking Islanders over Penguins 5-4

By The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Brock Nelson's second goal of the game 2:55 into overtime capped a frantic comeback to lift the New York Islanders over the Pittsburgh Penguins 5-4 Tuesday night to extend their points streak to 15 games.

The Islanders trailed by two late in the third period before goals by Josh Bailey and Ryan Pulock in the final 4:29 of regulation forced overtime. Nelson won it when he fired a shot at Matt Murray that trickled to the goaltender's right. Nelson tapped the rebound into the open net for his sixth goal of the season.

Anthony Beauvillier added his seventh for the Islanders, and Semyon Varlamov stopped 27 shots as New York improved to 14-0-1 in its last 15 games.

Brandon Tanev scored twice for Pittsburgh. Jake Guentzel had a goal and an assist and Bryan Rust also scored for the Penguins. Murray finished with 37 saves.

BLUES 3, LIGHTNING 1

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Oskar Sundqvist and David Perron scored to lead St. Louis past Tampa Bay, spoiling Pat Maroon's much-anticipated return after helping his hometown team to a Stanley Cup title last season.

Maroon, a St. Louis native, made his first trip back to the city since signing a one-year contract with the Lightning in the offseason. He scored the winning goal in double overtime of Game 7 against Dallas in the second round of the 2019 playoffs to send the Blues to the Western Conference final for the second time in four years.

Before the opening faceoff, Blues general manager Doug Armstrong presented Maroon with his Stanley Cup championship ring on the ice with former teammate Vladimir Taraskeno, who is out with an injury, alongside as well. Maroon received a standing ovation and as he waved to the crowd, the fans responded with thunderous cheers.

BRUINS 5, DEVILS 1

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) — David Pastrnak and Matt Grzelcyk scored two goals apiece, and Brad Marchand add-

ed on both goals. Mackinnon has five goals and eight assists in his past six games. Vladislav Kamenev

Jason Zucker had a goal and an assist, and Jonas Brodin also scored for the Wild, who improved to 4-2-

Gabriel Pageau and Brady Tkachuk also scored for Ottawa. Anders Nilsson made 35 saves, including 15 in the third period when the Senators were outshot 16-3. The Senators scored three goals in a 5:22 span in the second period to take a 4-2 lead. Valteri Filppula had a goal and an assist, and Robby Fabbri and Anthony Mantha scored for Detroit, which ended a five-game point streak (3-0-2). Defenseman Filip Hronek had two assists and Jonathan Bernier stopped 29 shots.

JETS 2, PREDATORS 1

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Patrik Laine and Nikolaj Ehlers scored, Connor Hellebuyck made 38 saves and Winnipeg defeated Nashville. The teams are heading in opposite directions in the tough Central Division. Winnipeg has won three in a row and five of six. The reeling Predators have lost five straight and seven of eight.

Hellebuyck made 10 saves in the first period, 12 in the second and 16 in the third.

GOLDEN KNIGHTS 4, MAPLE LEAFS 2

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Marc-Andre Fleury made 31 saves for his 450th win, including a diving stop late in the game, and Vegas held off Toronto. Fleury is three wins behind New York Rangers goalie Henrik Lundqvist for sixth place on the career list. Mark Stone, Cody Glass, Tomas Nosek and Cody Eakin scored for Vegas. But for the second consecutive game it was Fleury who kept the Golden Knights in it with outstanding saves — particularly when the Maple Leafs turned up the pressure in the third period. His biggest save came with 3:43 to go, when Nic Petan's backhand toward a wide-open net was thwarted as Fleury dove back to his left and with his body outstretched snatched the puck before it hit twine, sending 18,292 fans into a frenzy — even some wearing Maple Leafs jerseys. Jason Spezza and Zach Hyman scored for Toronto. Frederik Andersen, who has lost his last four starts, made 33 saves. □



New York Islanders' Brock Nelson (29) puts the game-winning overtime goal behind Pittsburgh Penguins goaltender Matt Murray (30) during an NHL hockey game in Pittsburgh, Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2019. The Islanders won 5-4.

Associated Press

ed three assists to lead Boston over New Jersey.

Tuukka Rask made 25 saves and New Jersey native Connor Clifton added a goal as the Bruins beat the Devils for the eighth time in nine meetings.

Blake Coleman scored for New Jersey, which was looking for its first three-game winning streak since December 2018. Mackenzie Blackwood made 23 saves in starting for the 12th time in 14 games.

BLUE JACKETS 5, CANADIENS 2

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Pierre-Luc Dubois had two goals and an assist, rookie Emil Bemstrom added a goal and an assist, and Columbus beat Montreal.

Joonas Korpihalo stopped 30 shots for his eighth win as Columbus improved to 8-8-4. Eric Robinson and Boone Jenner also scored for the Blue Jackets. Artturi Lehkonen and Joel Armia had the goals for the Canadiens. Carey Price stopped 21 shots in his first loss since Nov. 2 as Montreal fell to 11-6-4.

WILD 4, SABRES 1

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Zach Parise scored twice, Alex Stalock made 30 saves and Minnesota beat Buffalo.

1 in their last seven. Brandon Montour scored for the Sabres and Linus Ullmark stopped 22 shots. Buffalo is on a 1-6-2 skid and battling injuries at the forward position following 9-2-1 start.

STARS 6, CANUCKS 1

DALLAS (AP) — Jamie Benn scored twice, Ben Bishop made 32 saves and Dallas beat Vancouver for its fourth straight victory.

The Stars have a nine-game point streak (8-0-1) and are 11-1-1 in their last 13 games. Benn has three goals in the last two games after scoring only once in his first 20 games. He also assisted on Justin Dowling's third goal in four games.

Corey Perry and defenseman Taylor Fedun and Miro Heiskanen also scored for Dallas. Bo Horvat scored in the second period on Bishop. Vancouver goalie Jacob Markstrom stopped 25 shots.

AVALANCHE 3, FLAMES 2

CALGARY, Alberta (AP) — Andre Burakovsky stayed hot with another two goals, leading Colorado over slumping Calgary.

Burakovsky has five goals in three games. The 24-year-old forward was promoted to the top line, and center Nathan MacKinnon assist-

also scored for Colorado, which has won five of six. The Avalanche improve to 3-1-0 on a five-game trip that wraps up on Thursday in Minnesota.

HURRICANES 4, BLACK-HAWKS 2

CHICAGO (AP) — Nino Niederreiter had a goal and an assist, and Carolina beat Chicago for its fourth straight victory.

Andrei Svechnikov and Martin Necas also scored as Carolina earned the franchise's first sweep of a regular season road trip of at least three games. Sebastian Aho had an empty-netter, and Petr Mrazek made 30 saves.

Chicago had won four in a row and five of six overall. The Blackhawks scored 21 times during their win streak, but they were very quiet before making a big push in the third period. Patrick Kane helped fuel the rally with two assists on his 31st birthday. Defensemen Erik Gustafsson and Connor Murphy scored 1:10 apart to trim Carolina's lead to 3-2 with 6:45 left.

SENATORS 4, RED WINGS 3

DETROIT (AP) — Anthony Duclair had two goals and an assist, and Ottawa held on to beat Detroit. John

Catch your own dinner with Driftwood!

Motto at Driftwood Restaurant: Hook and Cook your Own Fish!



Captain Herby would catch the fish to be served at the restaurant the same day. That concept still lives, what is 'hooked' during the day is cooked in the evening at the restaurant. Herby shares his experience with his crew, who take out guests daily on their tournament rigged 35ft twin engine

Bertram "Driftwood" or on their more spacious 37ft twin engine Bertram called "Living Easy". Both yachts are available for charters from 8am to 12 noon, or from 1 to 5pm (6-hour trips also available). To book a fishing charter visit www.driftwoodfishingcharters.com or call Herby direct at (297)-5924040.



Have an authentic seafood dining experience at Driftwood Restaurant, situated in the characteristic downtown Oranjestad. This comfortable downtown restaurant has a long tradition (30 years) of serving the freshest fish, the biggest shrimp, and the most succulent Caribbean Lobster. Opening Hours: 5:00pm to 10.30pm (closed on Sundays) For reservations visit www.driftwoodaruba.com or call (297)-5832515 Address: Klipstraat 12. Oranjestad, Aruba

Oranjestad- Renaissance Marina Downtown is home to the Driftwood Fishing Charters, the successful fishermen of the established seafood restaurant Driftwood. Herby senior and Herby Junior both share a passion and love for fishing. They know what the local waters have to offer and what fresh fish really means. Over 30 years ago, the idea for the fishing charter was born.



Ravens, Patriots, 49ers remain top 3 teams in AP Pro32 poll

By **SIMMI BUTTAR**
AP Pro Football Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Heading into the stretch run of the regular season, the NFL's top teams are trying to find and maintain their winning form as they get ready for the playoffs.

The top seven teams in the latest AP Pro32 poll remained the same from last week. In fact, eight of the top 10 teams all won in Week 11 and the other two, Seattle and Green Bay, had byes.

The Baltimore Ravens are on top, earning 10 of the 12 first-place votes for 378 points in balloting Tuesday by media members who regularly cover the NFL. The Ravens (8-2) have won six in a row and are coming off a 41-7 rout the Houston Texans. "That Lamar Jackson-Deshawn Watson showdown turned out to be no contest at all, as Jackson put in yet another MVP-worthy performance,"



Baltimore Ravens running back Mark Ingram (21) dives in for a touchdown on a pass from quarterback Lamar Jackson, not visible, during the second half of an NFL football game against the Houston Texans, Sunday, Nov. 17, 2019, in Baltimore.

Newsday's Bob Glauber said. The Ravens will close Week 12 when they head to Los Angeles to take on the Rams next Monday night. The New England Patriots (9-1) received the other two first-place votes for 372 points to stay in the No. 2 spot. "Bill Belichick has

boasted several suffocating defenses during his glorious reign in Foxborough, but this current unit may just rank at the head of the class," said Ira Kaufman of Fox 13 in Tampa, Florida. The top two teams in the NFC West, the San Francisco 49ers and the Seahawks, are next and the Packers

round out the top five. The 49ers host the Packers on Sunday night in one of the top matchups of the week. "The Niners' running game will test this defense," Fox Sports' John Czarnecki said. Drew Brees and the New Orleans Saints got back on the winning track with a 34-17 victory over the Tampa

Associated Press

Bay Buccaneers to maintain the No. 6 spot.

And Minnesota Vikings overcame a 20-0 halftime deficit to rally past the Denver Broncos 27-23 and stay at No. 7.

Patrick Mahomes and the Kansas City Chiefs moved up a spot to No. 8 after holding off the Los Angeles Chargers 24-17 in Mexico City on Monday night. The Chiefs will have their bye week to rest up as they try to hold off the surprising Oakland Raiders in the AFC West.

The Dallas Cowboys inched up one place to No. 9 after piling up 509 yards in handling the Detroit Lions 35-27. The Cowboys have a big challenge this week as they head to Foxborough, Massachusetts, to take on the Tom Brady and the Patriots. And the Buffalo Bills gained a spot to round out the top 10. The Bills (7-3) matched their best start in 20 years with a 37-20 win at Miami. □



Cleveland Browns star defensive end Myles Garrett, rear, leaves an office building in New York, Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2019. Associated Press

Browns' Garrett

Continued from Front

The former No. 1 overall draft pick spent roughly two hours in the league's Manhattan offices before leaving with his representatives. He did not speak to the media.

In the closing seconds of the Browns' 21-7 victory over the rival Steelers on Thursday night, Garrett wrestled Rudolph to the ground before they scuffled. Pittsburgh's QB unsuccessfully tried to rip off Garrett's helmet before the two got to their feet.

That's when Garrett yanked off Rudolph's helmet, swinging it and connecting with the top of the QB's head. Rudolph avoided injury and was not suspended despite his attempt to grab Garrett's helmet or charging at him.

On Wednesday, Rudolph, who likely will be fined for his involvement, said he doesn't begrudge Garrett.

"I have no ill will toward Myles Garrett, great respect for his ability as a player and I know if Myles could go back he would handle the situation differently," Rudolph told reporters in Pittsburgh after reading a prepared statement. "As for my involvement last week, there is no acceptable excuse. The bottom line is I should have done

a better job keeping my composure in that situation.

"It falls short of what I believe it means to be a Pittsburgh Steeler and a member of the NFL."

It's unclear when Thrash will rule on Garrett's appeal. As part of his punishment, the league said Garrett is required to meet with Commissioner Roger Goodell's office before he can be reinstated.

Earlier this week, he and Hall of Fame linebacker Derrick Brooks heard appeals of Browns defensive tackle Larry Ogunjobi's one-game suspension and Steelers center Maurkice Pouncey's three-game ban.

Ogunjobi shoved a helmetless Rudolph to the ground during the melee while Pouncey punched and kicked Garrett as he lay on the ground.

Neither ruling has been made.

Browns coach Freddie Kitchens would not divulge who from the team accompanied Garrett to his hearing.

"Myles has great representation," Kitchens said. "More importantly, Myles will represent himself well. We're going to continue to support him and Larry and we will not waver with that support." □



Portland Trail Blazers forward Carmelo Anthony is defended by New Orleans Pelicans guard Kenrich Williams (34) during the second half of an NBA basketball game in New Orleans, Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2019. The Pelicans won 115-104. Associated Press

Blazers fall in New Orleans as Anthony has 10 in debut

By The Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Jrue Holiday had 22 points and 10 assists, Brandon Ingram added 21 points, and the New Orleans Pelicans spoiled Carmelo Anthony's Portland debut with a 115-104 victory over the Trail Blazers on Tuesday night. Anthony finished with 10 points while Portland leading scorer and four-time All-Star Damian Lillard missed his first game of the season with back spasms. Starting at forward and playing across the street from where he led Syracuse to the 2003 NCAA championship over Kansas, Anthony scored the Blazers' first points of the game on a 3-pointer from 26 feet out, but wound up missing 10 of 14 shots in what was the first game of his 17th NBA season.

J.J. Redick hit 4 of 9 3-pointers and scored 14 points for New Orleans, which has won two straight and three of four. Kenrich Wil-

liams, who got the start at forward, filled the stat sheet with hustle plays, grabbing 14 rebounds to go with three steals and a blocked shot. He also scored eight points.

LAKERS 112, THUNDER 107

LOS ANGELES (AP) — LeBron James became the first player in NBA history to record a triple-double against every team in the league, and Anthony Davis scored 34 points during the Lakers' fifth straight victory. James posted 25 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists to boost the NBA-leading Lakers, who have won 12 of 13 after a perfect four-game homestand.

James is fifth in NBA history with 86 triple-doubles, but the four players in front of him — Oscar Robertson, Russell Westbrook, Lakers great Magic Johnson and Lakers assistant coach Jason Kidd — hadn't done it against 30 different teams. Dennis Schröder scored 20 of his season-high 31 points

in a phenomenal first half for the Thunder, who have lost four of five despite two solid performances at Staples Center. Danilo Gallinari added 25 points in his former home arena, and Nerlens Noel had 15.

WARRIORS 114, GRIZZLIES 95

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Alec Burks scored a season-high 29 points, Glenn Robinson III added 20 and Golden State snapped a seven-game losing streak with a victory over Memphis. Marquese Chriss and Eric Paschall added 17 points apiece for the Warriors. Draymond Green was just short of his 24th career triple-double with eight points, 10 rebounds and 11 assists.

Rookie Ja Morant scored 20 points for Memphis, while Dillon Brooks finished with 18. Brandon Clarke added 17 and Jae Crowder had 15 points along with 11 rebounds as Memphis lost its second straight. □

Ellsbury released by Yankees, who owe \$26 million

NEW YORK (AP) — The Yankees have given up on Jacoby Ellsbury, cutting the off-injured outfielder with more than \$26 million left in his \$153 million, seven-year contract.

Ellsbury, who has not played since 2017, was released Wednesday to clear a 40-man roster spot as New York added seven players to protect them from next month's Rule 5 draft.

Ellsbury is owed \$26,285,714 by the Yankees in one of their biggest free agent mistakes: \$21,142,857 for next season plus a \$5 million buyout of a \$21 million team option for 2021.

New York also cut frequently injured first baseman Greg Bird and left-hander Nestor Cortes Jr., designating the pair for assignment. Outfielder Estevan Florial was added to the major league roster along with right-handers Deivi García, Luis Gil, Brooks Kriske, Luis Medina, Nick Nelson and Miguel Yajure.

Now 36, Ellsbury hit .264 with 39 homers, 198 RBIs and 102 stolen bases in 520 games in six seasons with the Yankees. He spent his first seven



In this Aug. 30, 2017, file photo, New York Yankees' Jacoby Ellsbury reacts after grounding out to end the sixth inning in the first game of the baseball team's doubleheader against the Cleveland Indians at Yankee Stadium in New York.

seasons with Boston and was in All-Star in 2011, and arrived in New York with a .284 career average, 104 homers, 512 RBIs and 343 steals for Boston.

Ellsbury injured an oblique muscle in his right side early during spring training in 2018, developed a bad back and had hip surgery on Aug. 6 to repair a torn labrum in his left hip. He ex-

perienced plantar fasciitis in his right foot during his rehab program before spring training this year.

Bird, who turned 27 on Nov. 9, arrived in New York with great promise in 2015, debuting Aug. 13 and hitting .261 with 11 homers and 31 RBIs in 46 games. He missed all of 2016 following surgery that Feb. 2 to repair a torn labrum in his right shoulder,

an injury originally sustained that May with Double-A Trenton.

Bird returned to bat .451 with eight homers in spring training during 2017 but fouled a ball off his right ankle March 30, started the season 6 for 60 and went on the disabled list May 2. When the foot did not improve, Bird had surgery July 18 to remove a bone in the

Associated Press

ankle. He returned in late August and hit three home runs in the playoffs, including a seventh-inning drive off Andrew Miller that lifted New York to a 1-0 win over Cleveland in Game 3 of the Division Series.

But then he slumped to a .154 average with four RBIs during spring training in 2018 and had surgery March 27 to remove a broken bone spur from the outside of the ankle. Bird returned May 26 and hit just .199 with 11 homers and 38 RBIs, losing the first-base job to Luke Voit.

Eligible for arbitration for the first time in 2019, he had a \$1.2 million salary. Bird went on the injured list with a left plantar fascia tear on April 16, three days after what turned out to be his final game. He hit .171 in 10 games with one RBI, an opening-day home run off Baltimore's Paul Fry.

Cortes, who turns 25 on Dec. 10, was 5-1 with a 5.67 ERA in 32 relief appearances and one start this year after making four relief appearances in his first big league season with the Yankees in 2018. □

More than 100 in Congress ask MLB to reconsider minors plan

WASHINGTON (AP) — Nearly one-quarter of the members of the U.S. House of Representatives asked Major League Baseball to reconsider its proposal for a restructuring of the minor leagues after the 2020 season that would lead to 42 teams being dropped from their current circuits.

Reps. Lori Trahan, D-Mass., and David McKinley, R-W. Va., took the lead in the letter sent Tuesday to baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred and signed by 106 members of the House.

"The abandonment of minor league clubs by Major League Baseball would devastate our communities, their bond purchasers, and other stakeholders affected by the potential loss of these clubs," the letter said. "We want you to fully understand the impact this could have not only on the communities we represent,

but also on the long-term support that Congress has always afforded our national pastime on a wide variety of legislative initiatives." The Professional Baseball Agreement between Major League Baseball and the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues expires after the 2020 season. The 176 minor league teams affiliated with the NAPBL combined to draw 41.5 million fans this year.

MLB's initial proposal, first reported by Baseball America on Oct. 18, would drop four Double-A teams: Binghamton, New York, and Erie, Pennsylvania, of the Eastern League and Chattanooga and Jackson, Tennessee, of the Southern League. The plan would eliminate the 28 teams from four Class A Short Season and Rookie Advanced leagues that do not play at spring training complexes

and would lower the minimum guaranteed affiliation agreements from 160 to 120. Major league teams supply players, coaches and equipment to the minors and say they spend nearly \$500 million annually in salary while receiving back only \$18 million.

Deputy Commissioner Dan Halem, in a letter to Congress on Tuesday, said MLB wants upgraded stadiums, reduced travel, higher pay and better accommodations for players and a more favorable process for reaching affiliation agreements. Halem wrote that if "significantly fewer than 160 affiliates" are guaranteed, dropped communities will be invited "to join collegiate summer leagues similar to the Cape Cod League (but under the umbrella of MLB), existing independent leagues, or a newly created 'Dream

League' that also would operate under the auspices of MLB."

He said based on feedback from teams and players "we have identified more than 40 minor league stadiums that do not possess adequate training facilities, medical facilities, locker rooms, and, in some cases, playing fields" and said the minor leagues "communicated to us that it is unrealistic for us to expect lower-level minor league affiliates to meet our facility standards because of the costs involved in upgrading the facilities."

Jeff Lantz, a spokesman for the NAPBL, said there was not an immediate response from the minor league governing body.

Several minor league players have sued MLB and its teams, claiming their pay violates minimum wage laws. Most minor leaguers

receive an initial monthly salary of \$1,100.

Halem wrote "the majority of major league club owners believe that there are too many players in the minor league system" and said fewer than 5% of players selected after the 25th round of the annual amateur draft reach the majors. "Most of the players on the rosters of rookie, short season and low-A teams are there to fill rosters so the minor league teams can stage games for their fans, not because the Major League Clubs require all of those players to develop major league talent," he wrote.

In the last contentious negotiation over a PBA, Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., called for hearings in November 1990. The sides reached an agreement the following month for a seven-year deal. □

7-time NASCAR champion Jimmie Johnson to retire after 2020

By JENNA FRYER

AP Auto Racing Writer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) —

Jimmie Johnson sat down next to Jeff Gordon at a 2001 driver meeting and asked the champion if he had time to offer any career advice.

Gordon was so impressed with the fellow California native that he encouraged Rick Hendrick to start a team built specifically for the 25-year-old Johnson.

It turned into one of the greatest hires in NASCAR history and nudged Gordon aside as the most dominant driver on the track. Now Johnson will follow Gordon and many other NASCAR superstars into retirement as the seven-time champion announced Wednesday he will retire from full-time competition after next season.

The 44-year-old Johnson joins an exodus of popular drivers that began when Gordon retired after the 2015 season. Tony Stewart, Dale Earnhardt Jr, Carl Edwards, Matt Kenseth, Danica Patrick and Jamie McMurray are among those who followed Gordon out the door.

Johnson, the winningest driver of his era, said in a video posted to his social media and titled "(hash) Chasing8 one final time" that next season will be his final attempt to win a record eighth Cup title. It will be his 19th season in the No. 48 Chevrolet.

"I am so thankful for 18 incredible years of racing in NASCAR," Johnson said in the black-and-white video comprised of highlights from his career. "This sport has been good to me and allowed me to do something I truly love. I showed up chasing a dream and



In this Nov. 10, 2019, file photo, Jimmie Johnson waves during driver introductions prior to the NASCAR Cup Series auto race at ISM Raceway in Avondale, Ariz.

achieved more than I thought possible. I am looking forward to next season and celebrating what will be my last year as a full-time Cup driver. I know what this team is capable of and I hope 2020 is one of the best yet."

Johnson scheduled a Thursday news conference at Hendrick Motorsports to discuss his decision. He joins Gordon and Earnhardt Jr. as Hendrick drivers who have called it a career since 2015.

"NASCAR history will always hold Jimmie Johnson in the highest regard, for his hard-charging success on the racetrack and the way he conducted himself as a champion off the track," said NASCAR Chairman Jim France. "This remark-

able seven-time champion — through his competitive spirit, immense talent and sportsmanship — has made NASCAR a better sport."

Reaction was immediate from drivers, as well as retired cyclist Lance Armstrong and seven-time Supercross champion Jeremy McGrath.

"Proud of you, bro," Armstrong wrote. "And even prouder to call you a friend. Let's go get #8."

Gordon called Johnson "a class act and true champion on & off track" while current Hendrick teammate Chase Elliott was among the many young drivers to refer to Johnson as the greatest of all time with an emoji of a goat.

Johnson has 83 career victories, tied with Cale Yar-

borough for sixth all-time. He trails Darrell Waltrip and Bobby Allison on the all-time win list by one, and two wins in 2020 would give him sole possession of fourth on the list behind Gordon's mark of 93 trips to victory lane.

Johnson's seven titles are tied with Richard Petty and Dale Earnhardt for most in the Cup Series, the last one coming in 2016. His most impressive championship battle was likely title No. 2 during a 10-win 2007 season in an epic showdown with Gordon, his teammate. Gordon won back-to-back playoff races that season to take the points lead, but Johnson reeled off four straight victories and Gordon visited him in victory lane after the fourth

win and bowed in concession. The heady days are long gone and Johnson has been in a two-year slump. He last won a race in 2017 and had two different crew chief changes this season while missing the playoffs for the first time since the format began in 2004. He finished 18th in the final standings, 13th in Sunday's season finale, and has just five top-five finishes the last two years.

Johnson has driven for Rick Hendrick his entire Cup career and set a NASCAR record in winning five consecutive titles from 2006 through 2010, an accomplishment that earned him Associated Press Male Athlete of the Year after his fifth crown.

All 83 of Johnson's wins have come in the No. 48 and include two Daytona 500s, four victories at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, a record 11 wins at Dover International Speedway, nine at Martinsville Speedway and eight at Charlotte Motor Speedway.

Johnson had two years remaining on his contract when new sponsor Ally signed on before this season to replace Lowe's, which had sponsored Johnson from his 2001 debut through 2018. Ally last month announced a three-year extension to sponsor the No. 48, but Johnson's future was not tied to the renewal through 2023.

"Jimmie Johnson is a legend in racing, the epitome of class and the ultimate representative of our brand," said Andrea Brimmer, chief marketing officer at Ally.

"We are proud that Jimmie will finish his remarkable NASCAR driving career with Ally as his primary sponsor." □

U.S. baseball grouped with Puerto Rico, Dominicans, Nicaragua

By The Associated Press

After failing to earn an Olympic baseball berth at the Premier12 tournament, the United States was grouped with Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua for the first round of Americas qualifying.

Host Japan, South Korea, Mexico and Israel already have qualified for the Olympic baseball tournament in Japan next summer, with two

berths to be determined. The U.S. held a ninth-inning lead Sunday but lost to Mexico 3-2 in 10 innings.

The World Baseball Softball Confederation held a draw Wednesday in Sakai, Japan, for the Americas tournament, to be held in Arizona from March 22-26. In the other first-round group, Cuba was drawn to play Canada, Colombia and Venezuela.

The top two teams in each group advance to a super round, with the results carried forward from the games between the teams who advanced. The super group winner gets an Olympic berth. The second- and third-place teams advance to the final qualifying tournament in Taiwan from April 1-5, where they will be joined by China, the Netherlands, Taiwan and the top team from an Oceania pre-qualifier. □

Muted launch for Google's game-streaming service Stadia

By MAE ANDERSON
AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Google's new game-streaming service Stadia demonstrates the possibilities of gaming from the cloud, but experts say it's hindered by a lack of compelling video games and a convoluted pricing scheme.

Piers Harding-Rolls, head of games research at IHS Markit, called Tuesday's launch more of a public beta test than an actual debut. He said the real test will come next year, when Stadia begins to compete with new video game consoles due out from Sony and Microsoft.

"It is not at the moment a challenger to console companies or PC gaming," he said. "At this stage it is really about getting the product into market and into hands of consumers."

Google can learn from that and fine-tune the service as it grows and competition intensifies, he said.

Much like movies and music, the traditional video-game industry has been shifting from physical hardware and games to digital downloads and streaming. Such an approach lets gamers play from a variety of devices, picking up where they left off as they switch, without having to buy expensive equipment. Tech companies such as Google are trying to establish a foothold early — even with some kinks — before streaming becomes as established in gaming as Netflix is in video and Spotify in music.

The benefits go beyond subscription revenue. While Stadia itself won't have ads. Google will try to tie Stadia with its other services, like YouTube and its digital assistant. Ultimately, as more people use Google services, the company can collect more data on user habits and show more ads targeted to those interests. But these tech companies must compete with gaming stalwarts Sony and Microsoft, both of which have streaming ambitions of their

own. Unlike Google, they also have decades of experience negotiating with game publishers and navigating the gaming industry. Microsoft's \$10-a-month Xbox Game Pass lets players download more than 100 games on the Xbox console at no additional cost. The company is also working on a streaming service, Project xCloud, though few details are available. Sony's PlayStation Now, also at \$10 a month, or \$60 a year, lets users stream or download games on its PlayStation 4 console or a personal computer.

Stadia, on the other hand, isn't meant for the console. But it requires a PC with Google's Chrome browser or a Google-made device — a Chromebook laptop, a Chromecast TV streaming device or a Pixel phone. It won't work with other phones using the company's Android operating system, or on iPhones, for now. The service will eventually cost \$10 a month, but it's currently available only to those who bought a \$130 bundle that includes a three-month subscription. The service currently offers 22 games — most carrying a separate fee. For example, the adventure game "Red Dead Redemption 2" starts at \$60.

Apple is also getting into the game-subscription business with Apple Arcade. The \$5-a-month service lets users download a variety of games to play on iPhones and iPads. Games don't cost extra. Apple Arcade lets people download games to play offline, but Stadia does not.

Google is competing on this front, too, with a separate subscription called Google Play Pass. The \$5-a-month service gives users access to about 350 games and apps on Android devices. Video game streaming typically requires a strong connection and more computing power than simply streaming video, as there is real-time interaction between player and game.

Google says it is tapping its massive data centers to power the system.

From a technological front, Stadia impresses, said Randy Nelson, head of mobile insights at analytic firm Sensor Tower.

But elsewhere, Stadia falls short. He said there is a disconnect between the hard-core gaming audience that Google appears to be targeting, and the few compelling games actually available.

"Gylt," a fantasy horror adventure game, is the service's only new exclusive title. Other games available at launch include "Shadow of the Tomb Raider," "Mortal Kombat," "Just Dance 2020" and "Destiny 2" — but all of these are available on other game platforms, too.

"It does seem to be a bit of a bare-bones launch to get this service out the door," Nelson said. "Hopefully Google will expand it over time."

Nelson said Google's approach is odd because it targets hard-core gamers who probably already have a console or PC, as well as many of the games on offer, rather than trying to reach more mainstream or casual users who don't want to invest a few hundred dollars in a console.

"There's certainly a missed opportunity here to position Stadia as a gateway to console-style gaming for casual and mobile players," Nelson said.

Also, consumers might be confused about pricing.

Google sold "Founder's Edition" bundles in advance, but is now offering a "Premiere Edition" bundle for the same price and benefits. Besides a three-month subscription, the bundle offers a Chromecast Ultra streaming device and a controller.

A stand-alone monthly subscription won't be available until 2020. A free version will also be available then. And while games are sold separately, the price depends on which level of service the gamer has. □



This undated photo provided by Google shows a controller that is part of a video-game streaming platform called Stadia that Google is launching on Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2019.

Associated Press



In this July 16, 2019, file photo, Ernie Field pushes the doorbell on his Ring doorbell camera at his home in Wolcott, Conn.

Associated Press

Senators press Amazon over doorbell camera security concerns

By MATT O'BRIEN
AP Technology Writer

A group of Democratic U.S. senators is questioning Amazon about the security of its Ring doorbell cameras following reports that some Ukraine-based employees had access to video footage from customers' homes. A letter to Amazon Wednesday from Sen. Ron Wyden of Oregon and four other Democrats said the internet-connected devices may pose national security concerns.

News site The Intercept reported in January that Ring employees in the U.S. and Ukraine had access to personal data from cameras around the world. The report said Ring gave a variety of employees and executives access to recorded and sometimes live video footage from customers' homes.

Besides citing the report, the senators noted that Ring devices routinely store video recordings and other data on Amazon servers.

"If hackers or foreign actors were to gain access to this data, it would not only threaten the privacy and safety of the impacted Americans; it could also threaten U.S. national security," the senators wrote. "Personal data can be exploited by foreign intelligence services to amplify the impact of espionage and influence operations."

The senators asked the company to explain its practices to address security vulnerabilities.

Ring says it's reviewing the letter.

Sens. Ed Markey of Massachusetts, Chris Van Hollen of Maryland, Christopher Coons of Delaware and Gary Peters of Michigan joined the letter. □



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Stocks slide on Wall Street over new trade war concerns

By **ALEX VEIGA**
Associated Press

Stocks moved broadly lower in afternoon trading on Wall Street Wednesday as investors turned anxious about the possibility that the U.S. and China may not reach a trade deal before next year.

A published report suggested a "phase one" trade pact may not be completed this year as negotiators continue to wrestle over differences. Beijing is pressing Washington to agree to broader tariffs rollbacks on Chinese goods.

Another potential hurdle: The Senate's passage of a resolution in support of human rights in Hong Kong following months of anti-government protests. China condemned the move and threatened "strong countermeasures."

President Donald Trump said Tuesday he was pre-



Traders **Andrew Silverman**, left, and **Robert Charmak** work on the floor of the **New York Stock Exchange**, Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2019.

pared to raise tariffs on Chinese exports if the nations can't reach an agreement on trade. Investors have been hoping the world's two biggest economies can make a deal before new and more damaging tariffs take effect next month. Growing optimism among investors that the

trade talks were making progress helped pave the way for gains in the market in recent weeks, including a string of all-time highs for the major stock indexes. Technology and communication services companies were among the biggest losers Wednesday. HP fell 2.1% and AT&T slid 3.6%.

Associated Press

Bank of America dropped 1% as financial stocks fell broadly along with bond yields. The yield on the 10-year Treasury slid to 1.74% from 1.78% late Tuesday. Falling bond yields hurt banks because they are a benchmark for the interest rates lenders charge on mortgages and other loans. Energy companies held up better than the rest of the market as oil prices jumped 3.3%. ConocoPhillips rose 3.2%.

Utilities also rose as traders moved to shift assets into less-risky and higher-dividend paying stocks. Target and Lowe's both made sharp gains after reporting encouraging earnings and forecasts.

KEEPING SCORE: The S&P 500 index was down 0.7% as of 2:03 p.m. Eastern time. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 195 points, or 0.7%, to 27,738. The Nasdaq

slid 0.8%. The Russell 2000 index of smaller company stocks also dropped 0.8%. Major stock indexes in Europe also fell.

CRACK SHOT: Target surged 12.7% after handily beating Wall Street's third-quarter earnings estimates. The retailer also raised its profit forecast for the year.

PROFIT REPAIR: Lowe's rose 3.6% after raising its profit forecast for the year following a solid third quarter. The home improvement retailer has been working to improve profit and sales to better compete with rival Home Depot. Home Depot, which cut its profit forecast after reporting disappointing earnings on Tuesday, fell 2.2%.

THAT'S NOT VERY HIP: Urban Outfitters plunged 14.9% after the clothing and accessories retailer fell short of Wall Street's third-quarter profit and sales forecasts. □

Fed minutes: Officials felt 3 cuts this year could be enough

By **MARTIN CRUTSINGER**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Most Federal Reserve officials believed last month that the three rate cuts they have made this year would be enough unless the economy weakened significantly. The minutes of the October Fed meeting, released Wednesday, reveal that "most participants" thought that this year's rate cuts would be sufficient to support mod-

erate growth, a continued strong job market and inflation rising toward the Fed's 2% target level. A "couple" of Fed officials suggested that this view should be reinforced by additional comments after the meeting that further cuts were "unlikely in the near term" unless the economy slowed significantly. The consensus among economists is that the Fed will now pause after having cut rates three times in 2019, with its

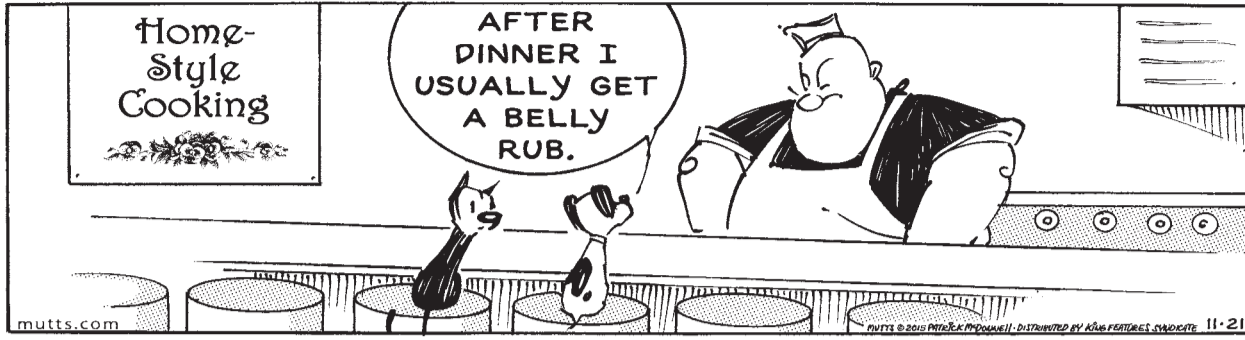
benchmark rate now in a range of 1.5% to 1.75%. The central bank's key rate influences many consumer and business loans. At a news conference after the Fed's Oct. 30 meeting, Chairman Jerome Powell had said that "monetary policy is in a good place." But Powell added that if "if developments emerge that cause a material reassessment of our outlook, we would respond accordingly. Policy is not on a pre-set course." □



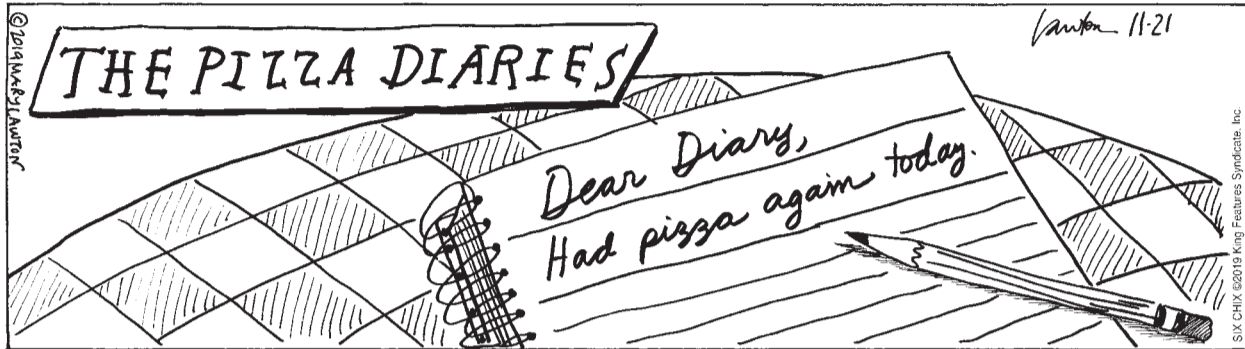
This July 31, 2019 file photo shows the **Federal Reserve Building** in Washington. The Federal Reserve says corporate debt remains at historically high levels but overall the U.S. financial system is resilient, a view in sharp contrast to the problems that led to the 2008 financial crisis.

Associated Press

Mutts



6 Chix



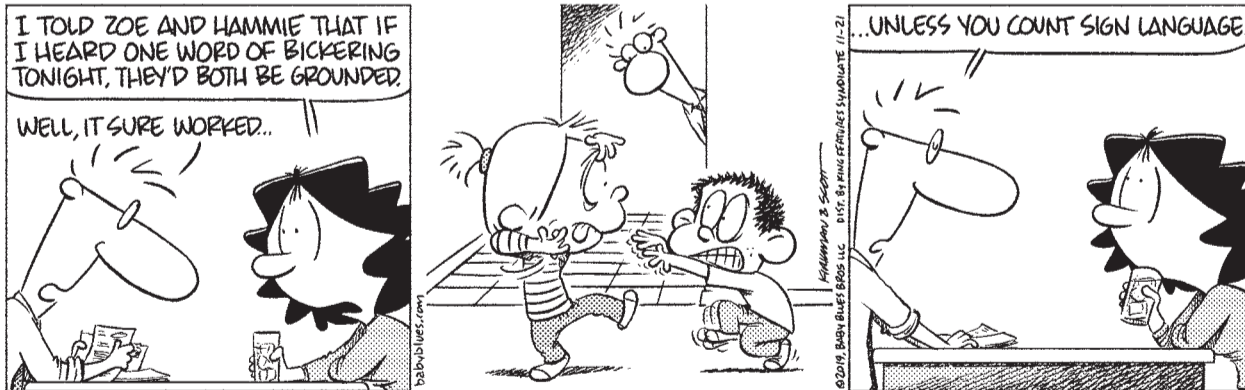
Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

			3			9		
	1			5			2	
8		4	2			3		
						5		1
	2			6			4	
1		5						
		3			5	7		8
	6			4			3	
		8			9			

Difficulty Level ★★★

11/21

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

7	5	4	6	8	9	1	2	3
2	8	6	4	1	3	7	5	9
3	1	9	7	5	2	6	4	8
9	6	7	5	2	1	8	3	4
8	2	3	9	7	4	5	6	1
1	4	5	3	6	8	2	9	7
5	3	2	8	9	7	4	1	6
4	7	1	2	3	6	9	8	5
6	9	8	1	4	5	3	7	2

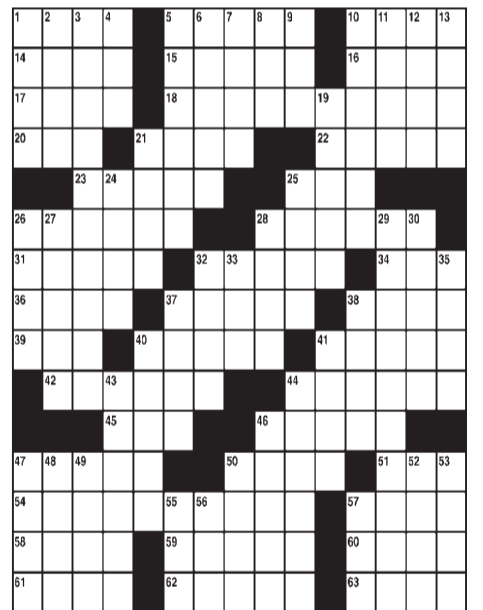
ACROSS

- 1 High chair accessories
- 5 Crab Louie or coleslaw
- 10 Venerable British historian
- 14 Put to _; drive away
- 15 Showy feather
- 16 Bug spray
- 17 Askew; crooked
- 18 _ for; signed up to join
- 20 TV's "Major _"
- 21 Untainted
- 22 Easy to reach
- 23 Kick out, as a tenant
- 25 Peach stone
- 26 Pointed tooth
- 28 See the _; take a tour

- 31 Initial phase
- 32 Sponge off others
- 34 Chinese _; deciduous tree
- 36 Winter flakes
- 37 Seal up cracks
- 38 The Bee Gees, e.g.
- 39 Twain's Sawyer
- 40 Wilkes-_, PA
- 41 Small skin openings
- 42 _ for; craves
- 44 Cuban exports
- 45 "Gosh!"
- 46 _ control; wild
- 47 Be on the same page
- 50 Spew forth
- 51 Octopus secretion
- 54 Skinniest
- 57 Backed by facts
- 58 Meghan, to Prince George
- 59 "Same for me!"
- 60 Actor's award
- 61 Team in the NBA
- 62 Sudden muscle cramp
- 63 Seizes

DOWN

- 1 Staple alternative
- 2 Nebraska's neighbor
- 3 Too heavy; oppressive
- 4 Piggy's home



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

11/21/19

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

ALUM	SAYS	CHOW
GONER	TRIP	HAVE
EVAADE	AMPUTATES	
DEF	CAB	RESENT
FREDS	RAT	
PSEUDO	BISECT	
UNCLE	PLANE	HEM
MATE	THING	PAPA
ARE	PRIDE	MULES
EDDIES	NOBLES	
ONA	RAISE	
ASSETS	INN	NBC
REASSURED	EDGAR	
TERN	RENE	SUEDE
SKIT	EVES	BREW

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11/21/19

- 41 _ helmet; safari hat
- 43 Representatives
- 44 Usual practice
- 46 Removes from power
- 47 As strong _ ox
- 48 Elmer's adhesive
- 49 Money for the landlord
- 50 _ kick out of; enjoy
- 52 Deadened
- 53 Islets off Florida
- 55 Harris & McMahon
- 56 _ Van Winkle
- 57 Reasonable bedtime

Bei Bei, an American-born panda, leaves Washington for China

By **ASHRAF KHALIL**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A specially equipped Boeing 777 jet took off from Dulles International Airport on Tuesday carrying a true Washington celebrity: Bei Bei, a 4-year-old giant panda. Visitors to Washington's National Zoo have watched him grow up since Day One. But now he's headed to China. Under terms of the zoo's agreement with the Chinese government, any panda born here must be sent to China when they reach age 4. When he reaches sexual maturity after age 6, Bei Bei will be entered into China's government-run breeding program, seeking to expand the vulnerable panda population. Bei Bei was born at the zoo on Aug. 22, 2015, the cub (via artificial insemination) of National Zoo pandas Mei Xiang and Tian Tian. His name, which translates as "treasure" or "precious" in Mandarin, was jointly selected by former first lady Michelle Obama and Peng Liyuan, the first lady of the People's Republic of China. There are an estimated 1,800 giant pandas in the wild, all of them in southwestern China. □

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Divi Dutch Village, Rm 128, wk 35, 26 wks left, 8/31 \$1800
Divi Village, Rm 3205, wk 17, 24 wks left, 4/25, \$1700
Divi Village, Rm7302, wk44, 18 wks left, 10/31, \$\$1600
Email: rmwjm@aol.com,
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212026

Halley Time Travel

Commercial property land
13,500 m2 at Barcadera \$60 per m2

House for sale

Tibushie (Noord)
2 br, 2 bath 1 apartment, pool \$260K

Aruba Divi Phoenix

1 BR week # 44 and 45 on 7th floor tower with 33 weeks remain \$10,000 each

Dutch Village

1 BR wk 46
Weeks remain 12/6 \$6500
2 BR wk 47
17 weeks remain \$ 7000

House for Sale

Tierra del Sol
3 br, 2 bath \$510K

Paradise Beach Villas

1 BR wk 45
3rd floor garden view \$4500
1 BR wk 47
2sd floor garden view \$4500

Eagle Resorts

2 BR wk 45 and 46
Ground floor \$6500 each

La Cabana Beach and casino

1 BR wk 47
4th floor thursday check in \$4500

Divi Village

Studio wk 47 and 48
1 st building to your left
From the eagle beach
30 weeks remain \$6500 each

Marriott Ocean Club

Gold Season
1 BR Ocean View \$4500
2 BR Ocean View \$7000
1 BR Ocean Front \$7500
2 BR Ocean Front \$14,000

Marriott Surf Club

Gold Season
2 BR Garden View \$5000
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Butterfly on a bomb range: Endangered Species Act at work

By **SETH BORENSTEIN**

AP Science Writer

FORT BRAGG, N.C. (AP)

— In the unlikely setting of the world's most populated military installation, amid all the regimented chaos, you'll find the Endangered Species Act at work.

There, as a 400-pound explosive resounds in the distance, a tiny St. Francis Satyr butterfly flits among the splotchy leaves, ready to lay as many as 100 eggs. At one point, this brown and frankly dull-looking butterfly could be found in only one place on Earth: Fort Bragg's artillery range.

Now, thanks in great measure to the 46-year-old federal act, they are found in eight more places — though all of them are on other parts of the Army base. And if all goes well, biologists will have just seeded habitat No. 10.

One of Earth's rarest butterfly species, there are maybe 3,000 St. Francis Satyrs. There are never going to be enough of them to get off the endangered list, but they're not about to go extinct either. They are permanent patients of the bureaucratic conservation hospital ward.

In some ways, the tiny butterfly is an ideal example of the more than 1,600 U.S. species that have been protected by the Endangered Species Act. Alive, but not exactly doing that well.

To some experts, just having these creatures around means the 46-year-old law has done its job. More than 99.2% of the species protected by the act survive, The Associated Press has found. Only 11 species were declared extinct.

On the other hand, only 39 U.S. species — about 2% of the overall number—



A St. Francis' satyr butterfly rests on a leaf in a swamp at Fort Bragg in North Carolina on Monday, July 29, 2019. Its wing was marked for identification by a biologist studying the rare insect.

have made it off the endangered list because of recovery, including bald eagles and American alligators.

"Species will remain in the Endangered Species Act hospital indefinitely. And I don't think that's a failure of the Endangered Species Act itself," says Jake Li, director for biodiversity at the Environmental Policy Innovation Center in Washington.

The Endangered Species Act "is the safety net of last resort," says Gary Frazer, assistant director of ecological services at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which administers the law. "We list species after all other vehicles of protection have failed."

The 1973 law, passed unanimously in the Senate, was designed to prevent species from going extinct and

to protect their habitat. Under the law, it is unlawful to "harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture or collect" endangered animals and plants, and it also forbids the elimination of their habitats.

Another species found at Fort Bragg — the red-cockaded woodpecker — is a case of success but at a cost of \$408 million over 19 years.

The woodpeckers live only in longleaf pines, which have been disappearing across the Southeast for more than a century, due to development and suppression of fires.

In the 1980s and 1990s, efforts to save the woodpecker and their trees set off a backlash among landowners who worried about interference on their private property. Wildlife officials were even shot at. Army officials weren't happy either.

"We couldn't maneuver. We couldn't shoot because they were afraid the bird was going to blink out and go into extinction," says former top Fort Bragg planning official Mike Lynch.

By the 1980s, the red cockaded woodpecker population was below 10,000 nationwide. Now, they're well

past 15,000 just on military bases.

After failed efforts, biologists and bureaucrats changed their approach. Instead of prohibiting work on land the woodpecker needs, Fish and Wildlife Service officials allowed landowners to make some changes as long as they generally didn't hurt the bird. The Army set fires to regularly burn scrub.

The result? When Fort Bragg Endangered Species Branch Chief Jackie Britcher started, in 1983, there were fewer than 300 woodpecker families on Fort Bragg. Now she counts 453 families.

"Something is going right," she says.

The Army has better land to maneuver in and the community is taking pride in the woodpecker, Lynch says.

From 1998 to 2016, the federal government tallied \$20.5 billion in spending on individual species on the endangered list. That's based on an annual per-species spending report that the Fish and Wildlife Service sends to Congress, but that tally is not comprehensive.

Seven species, mostly fish, ate up more than half of

the money expended under the act, according to the annual accounting figures. About \$3 million was spent to save the St. Francis Satyr butterfly.

Nick Haddad, a Michigan State University butterfly biologist and St. Francis expert, regularly visits the artillery range.

He expected a moon-scape, but found beauty. Because no one was venturing into the woods there, no one was dismantling beaver dams or snuffing out fires. Aside from munition fragments, the landscape was much like North Carolina before it was altered by humans.

The picky butterfly needs a touch of chaos in its habitat. It requires water, but not a lot. It thrives on fire to burn away overgrown plants, but not too much.

Now, Haddad and his team replicate those conditions elsewhere on base, and they watch the butterfly population grow.

After years of criticisms from conservatives that the endangered species program is too cumbersome for industry and landowners, President Donald Trump's administration has enacted 33 different reforms.

Among them: a change in the rules for species that are "threatened," the classification just below endangered. Instead of mandating, in most cases, that they get the same protection as endangered species, the new rules allow for variations.

That is better management, says the Fish and Wildlife Service's Frazer, adding, "It allows us to regulate really only those things that are important to conservation."

Noah Greenwald, endangered species director of the Center for Biological Diversity, characterizes the regulations as "a disaster."

While scientists across the globe warn of the coming extinction of a million species in the decades ahead, Nick Haddad is determined that the St. Francis Satyr butterfly won't be one of them. □

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Iconic singer hopes to close financing gap for African women

BY CARA ANNA
Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — The insect-eaten money fluttered in pieces to the floor. For global music star Angelique Kidjo, that image of her grandmother having to use a closet as a bank is driving her desire to see African women leap the many obstacles to obtaining credit — and respect.

The Benin-born singer, one of Africa's iconic artists and a collaborator with Philip Glass and others, is the voice of a new project aimed in part at rewriting laws across the continent that prevent millions of women from becoming a more powerful economic force.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Kidjo described what she has seen over decades of travel in Africa during which women in vibrant marketplaces wished they had the means to do more.

"Why do banks give more loans to men versus women? That's the question I have," she said. "Millions of women entrepreneurs in Africa, they lack loans versus the men. Once again, we come back to this patriarchy. And we know men pay less back than women."

Every time credit is refused to African women, who invest some 90% of what they earn in educating their children and supporting families and communi-



In this Thursday, April 21, 2016 file photo, singer and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Angelique Kidjo poses at the opening of the new photography exhibit "REFUGEE" at The Annenberg Space for Photography, in Los Angeles.

ties as opposed to about 40% for men, it's a disaster, Kidjo said. "We're taking up reducing the poverty rate in Africa to the smallest number ever. That's my passion. That's why I'm here."

She will help the African Development Bank next week launch AFAWA, or Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa. Already the G-7 group of the world's major democracies has committed \$250 million, and the bank is providing \$1 billion for the project that will be deployed across all 54 countries.

The goal is to raise \$5 billion for efforts that include helping to guarantee loans, training women on financial matters and eliminating laws and regulations that make accessing credit more difficult. African women face a \$42 billion financing gap

even though one in four starts or manages a business, the highest percentage in the world, the bank says.

In some African countries, women can't open a bank account without their husband or father, or inheritance laws leave them with little or nothing. That means no collateral. But reforms are catching on. In the World Bank's latest Women, Business and Law report in 2018, 32% of reforms tracked in sub-Saharan African countries addressed equal treatment for women and men in accessing credit and financial services. Angola, Congo and Zambia joined others in prohibiting gender-based credit discrimination, it said.

With the new fund for financing African women "we will be able to go as low as a few hundred dollars' loan ... for people

who need it the most," said Vanessa Mounzar, the African Development Bank's Chadian-French director of gender, women and civil society.

She was not ready to announce further pledges but said talks are continuing with potential donor countries, including African ones. With the continent's 1.2 billion population expected to double by 2050, the pressure for growth is huge.

"Look, women are one of the most powerful forces of nature on this continent," Mounzar said. "If they can be economically empowered, transformation will be fast-tracked like we've never seen."

Launching along with the new financing project is an index to assess how commercial banks are performing. "When they come to us for more (loans) we'll say, 'What have you done for women?'" Mounzar said.

The project is also turning accountability on itself, with Kidjo and other ambassadors meant to speak up if they think the project isn't moving quickly or effectively enough.

True, Kidjo said. "I'm not a very patient person. Those women, they don't have time to waste. Their livelihood is in danger. I'm gonna be very strict."

Women across Africa have told her they don't want charity, the singer said. They know how to

make money but aren't given the chance to try.

She recalled women in Ghana who resorted to digging a hole in the ground to stash their earnings because they didn't have bank accounts. And during a visit to Benin last month, one woman told her that to obtain a loan of 5,000 CFA (\$8) she had to show a property deed and hand over 100,000 CFA as collateral.

Such experiences have helped to inspire another new program, the \$100 million U.S.-run Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative fund with projects in 22 countries in Africa and elsewhere. They include Morocco, where women are benefiting from new laws that allow them to own land. The Africa-focused AFAWA, with vocal backing from French President Emmanuel Macron, will launch this month in Rwanda at the Global Gender Summit, which gathers multilateral development banks from around the world.

When that East African nation changed its laws to give women access to land, their financial inclusion jumped from 36% to 63% in just four years, Mounzar said. "Can you imagine?" she said. "I want all the women out there to know that's what's really driving us and our hearts. We are working for them and nothing else." □

Baldacci's new thriller spooks and horrifies

By WAKA TSUNODA
Associated Press

"A Minute to Midnight: an Atlee Pine Thriller," Grand Central Publishing, by David Baldacci

David Baldacci made his literary debut in 1996 with a political thriller, "Absolute Power." He has since written novels with blinding speed, many of them action thrillers featuring men with military backgrounds. With his latest, "A Minute to Midnight," the author changes gears and offers a

murder mystery that spooks and horrifies.

The drama begins as FBI agent Atlee Pine comes upon a registered sex offender trying to abduct a little girl. She overpowers the man and pulls the girl to safety, but she doesn't stop there.

She beats him until he is unconscious. In her mind, the man has become confused with the still unidentified individual who came into her bedroom when she was 6 years old, almost kill-

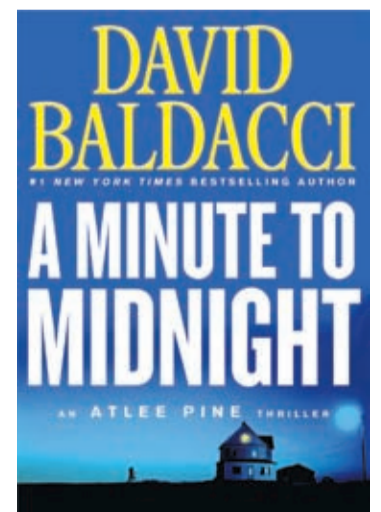
ing her and running off with her twin sister Mercy.

Ordered to take a vacation for having used excessive force in the incident, Pine returns to her hometown in Georgia and attempts to solve the crime that happened nearly 30 years ago. With the help of her assistant, Pine interviews her former neighbors, family friends and a man who now lives in her childhood home.

Many remember the horrific incident, but no one

can shed any new light on it. Meanwhile, a woman's corpse in a wedding veil turns up, followed by another in a tuxedo and yet another in an American Civil War costume.

Pine manages to solve these new cases and even discovers some surprising secrets about her parents, but the answer to her old case still evades her. For Atlee Pine fans, this is good news because it means Baldacci has another thriller about her in the oven. □



This cover image released by Grand Central Publishing shows "A Minute to Midnight," by David Baldacci.

Associated Press

Mark Ruffalo on playing the lawyer who took on DuPont



This image released by Focus Features shows Mark Ruffalo in a scene from "Dark Waters."

By LINDSEY BAHR
Associated Press
LOS ANGELES (AP) — Mark Ruffalo learned about corporate attorney Rob Bilott, who for 20 years battled DuPont to expose the harmful effects of the chemical PFOA, along with most of the country: In 2016 through an article in The New York Times Magazine. A cold call from a West Virginia farmer in 1998 who believed his creek was being contaminated and his animals poisoned by DuPont runoffs began the long investigation that ended in 2017 when DuPont and Chemours Co. agreed to pay more than \$600 million in a class action lawsuit on behalf of thousands. The result, "Dark Waters," directed by Todd Haynes and co-starring an impressive ensemble including Anne Hathaway, Tim Robbins, Bill Camp, William Jackson Harper and Bill Pullman opens Thursday night in theaters. Bilott also authored a book about the ordeal, "Exposure," which hit shelves in October. DuPont said in a statement that it

believes the film "misrepresents things that happened years ago, including our history, our values and science." The company also said it supports regulating the chemicals spotlighted in "Dark Waters." Ruffalo spoke to The Associated Press about the film. Remarks have been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: Was it difficult to get the rights?

RUFFALO: I was in the process of acquiring the rights after reading (the article) and I got a call from my friends at Participant Media who said, "Hey I think we're actually bidding against each other for this story. We love it. Would you like to join forces with us?" I'd done "Spotlight" with them and I was like, "I would like that." And then we started to develop it ... This thing happened in record time. It (usually) takes 5-7 years to get a movie made.

AP: Why did you think of Todd Haynes to direct?

RUFFALO: We'd been bumping into each other for years and I'd been such

a big fan of his. I thought he would do something really beautiful with this. It needs that kind of spaciousness and depth to really make it work because there's so much legalese and data that unless we're attached to this character and really understand him, no one will stay with this story. (Haynes) would figure out a way to bridge 20 years in a movie elegantly and he would make the most gorgeous version of this movie.

AP: When did you meet Rob Bilott and start to develop a relationship with him?

RUFFALO: Very early on. While we were in talks of acquiring the story, I wanted to talk to him about it. I was on the phone with him for quite some time laying out my vision for it. But I wanted to know more. I felt like the whole story wasn't really in that New York Times article. Especially concerning his relationship to (his law firm) Taft and what that must have been like and how difficult that must have been. The article doesn't get into that. □

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 PH MON-THU 6:00 | 8:20
 FRI 6:00 | 8:20 | 10:40
 SAT 3:40 | 6:00 | 8:20 | 10:40
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CHARLES ANGELS
 KRISTEN STEWART | NAOMI SCOTT
 WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
 PH MON-THU & SUN 8:30
 FRI-SAT SAT 8:30 | 11:10
 PBP MON-FRI 4:10 | 6:35 | 9:00
 SAT-SUN 1:45 | 4:10 | 6:35 | 9:00

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 CHRISTIAN BALE | MATT DAMON
 WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
 PH MON-FRI 7:50
 SAT-SUN 4:35 | 7:50
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Last Christmas
 EMILIA CLARKE | HENRY GOLDING
 WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES PG-13
 PH MON-FRI 6:45
 SAT-SUN 1:55 | 4:20 | 6:45
 PBP MON-FRI 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30
 SAT-SUN 2:30 | 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30

PLAYING WITH FIRE
 JOHN CENA | KEEGAN-MICHAEL KEY
 WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES PG
 PH MON-FRI 6:10
 SAT-SUN 3:50 | 6:10
 PBP MON-FRI 4:45 | 7:00 | 9:15
 SAT-SUN 2:30 | 4:45 | 7:00 | 9:15

TERMINATOR DARK FATE
 LINDA HAMILTON | ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
 WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES R
 PH MON-SUN 9:10

MALEFICENT MISTRESS OF EVIL
 ANGELINA JOLIE | ELLE FANNING
 WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES PG
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 SAT-SUN 1:10 | 3:40 | 6:10

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Michelle Obama, Gaga, J. Lo to join Oprah on wellness tour

By MESFIN FEKADU
Associated Press
NEW YORK (AP) — Oprah Winfrey's going on tour, and she's bringing a rock-star lineup with her, including former first lady Michelle Obama and Grammy- and Oscar-winner Lady Gaga. Live Nation announced Wednesday that Winfrey's wellness arena tour with WW (Weight Watchers Reimagined) — dubbed "Oprah's 2020 Vision: Your Life in Focus" — will also include guest appearances from Jennifer Lopez, Dwayne Johnson, Amy Schumer, Tina Fey, Tracee Ellis Ross and Kate Hudson. On the tour, Winfrey will hold one-on-one conversations with the superstars, first with Gaga on January 4, 2020, in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The nine-city tour will also visit St. Paul, Minnesota (Fey); Charlotte, North Carolina (Schumer); At-



This combination photo shows, top row from left, Oprah Winfrey, former first lady Michelle Obama, Dwayne Johnson, Lady Gaga, bottom row from left, Jennifer Lopez, Tina Fey, Tracee Ellis Ross and Amy Schumer.

lanta (Johnson); Brooklyn, New York (Obama); Dallas (Ellis Ross); San Francisco (Hudson); and Los Angeles (Lopez). Winfrey will wrap the tour on March 7 in Denver with BFF Gayle King. In addition to the celebrity interviews, each full-day wellness event will in-

clude Winfrey discussing her own wellness journey; a dance exercise from choreographer Julianne Hough; talks from inspirational guest speakers; a pre-show dance party; a WW-customized box lunch; and interactive concourse activations. □

New acts rule Grammys as Lizzo, Lil Nas, Eilish lead in noms

By **MESFIN FEKADU**

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The Grammys are screaming "Cuz I Love You" to Lizzo: The breakthrough singer-rapper scored a whopping eight nominations, including bids for the top four awards, making her the show's top-nominated act. Lizzo picked up nominations for album of the year with her major-label debut, "Cuz I Love You"; song and record of the year with her anthemic No. 1 hit, "Truth Hurts"; and best new artist. Like Lizzo, other new artists dominated with Grammy nominations on Wednesday: Billie Eilish and Lil Nas X earned six nominations apiece.

Eilish also scored nominations in the top four categories, making the 17-year-old the youngest artist in the history of the Grammys to achieve the feat. Lil Nas X, 20, is up for three of the top four awards, including album and record of the year for "Old Town Road," featuring Billy Ray Cyrus.

Lizzo's "Cuz I Love You," Eilish's "When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?" and Lil Nas X's "7" — an 8-song EP — will compete for album of the year along with Ariana Grande's "Thank U, Next," Bon Iver's "1,1," Vampire Weekend's "Father of the Bride," H.E.R.'s "I Used to Know Her" and Lana Del Rey's "Norman (Expletive) Rockwell!"

Nominees for record of the year include songs that hit No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart this year, including "Old Town Road," "Truth Hurts," Eilish's "Bad Guy," Grande's "7 Rings" and Post Malone and Swae Lee's "Sunflower." H.E.R.'s "Hard Place," Bon Iver's "Hey, Ma" and Khalid's "Talk," which peaked at No. 3 on the Hot 100, round out the eight nominees.

While Taylor Swift was shut out of album of the year with "Lover," the album's title track earned a nomination for song of the year, a songwriter's award. It will compete with "Truth Hurts," "Bad Guy," "Hard Place," Lady Gaga's "Always Remember Us This Way" from

"A Star Is Born," Lewis Capaldi's "Someone You Loved," Lana Del Rey's "Norman (Expletive) Rockwell" and Tanya Tucker's "Bring My Flowers Now," co-written by Brandi Carlile.

Swift earned three nominations, while Beyoncé — who was shut out of the top

while seven of the eight song-of-the-year nominees are by women. Female musicians also rule in the best new artist category, though record of the year is evenly split.

Grande, who won her first Grammy earlier this year, scored five nominations, as

The 31-year-old, who performed with Prince on his "Plectrumelectrum" album, grinded as an independent and touring artist for years before signing a major-label deal, releasing her first album in 2013.

But this year marked her major breakthrough: Her

"Truth Hurts" was co-written by Tele, Jesse Saint John and Ricky Reed, who is nominated for producer of the year (non-classical). Mina Lioness, the British singer who Lizzo gave writing credit to after using some of her viral tweet in the hit song, didn't appear on the list of writers nominated for song of the year for "Truth Hurts."

Lizzo's label, Atlantic Records, told The Associated Press last week it was in the process of adding Lioness to the song's credits.

Lizzo's other nominations include best urban contemporary album, best pop solo performance for "Truth Hurts," best traditional R&B performance for "Jerome" and best R&B performance for "Exactly How I Am," which features Gucci Mane and marks the rapper's first Grammy nomination.

Another first-time nominee: former first lady Michelle Obama, who is nominated for best spoken word album for "Becoming" (Barack Obama has won two Grammys in the same category).

Nipsey Hussle, who died in March and was nominated for best rap album earlier this year, scored three nominations: His song "Racks In the Middle" is up for best rap performance and best rap song, while "Higher" — a collaboration with DJ Khaled and John Legend that was one of the last songs Hussle recorded — is nominated for best rap/sung performance.

The Cranberries picked up a nomination for best rock album for their eighth and final album, "In the End," which the surviving members of the Irish band created using unfinished vocals from singer Dolores O'Riordan, who died last year.

The 2020 Grammys will hand out awards in its 84 categories live from the Staples Center in Los Angeles on January 26.

Nominees were selected from more than 20,000 submissions, and the final round of voting runs from Dec. 9 until Jan. 3. □



This June 23, 2019 file photo shows Lil Nas X performing "Old Town Road" at the BET Awards in Los Angeles.

three categories — scored four.

While her groundbreaking "Homecoming" documentary earned a nomination for best music film, its album version didn't pick up any nominations.

Instead her "The Lion King: The Gift" project — which features songs inspired by "The Lion King," for which she voiced the character Nala — is up for best pop vocal album, competing with projects from Ed Sheeran, Swift, Eilish and Grande. Beyoncé's "Spirit," from "The Lion King" which is being pushed for Oscar consideration, is up for best pop solo performance along with Swift's "You Need to Calm Down," "Truth Hurts," "Bad Guy" and "7 Rings."

Overall, female acts outperformed their male counterparts in the top four categories: Five of the eight album-of-the-year contenders are women,

did H.E.R. and Finneas, Eilish's older brother who co-wrote, co-produced and engineered her debut album. Finneas' nominations include producer of the year (non-classical) and best engineered album (non-classical).

Several acts picked up four nominations, including J. Cole, Gary Clark Jr., Lucky Daye, Thom Yorke, Bob Ludwig and Tanya Tucker, who in August released her first album of new songs in 17 years.

British country-soul performer Yola also scored four bids, including best new artist, pitting her against Lizzo, Lil Nas X, Eilish, pop singer Maggie Rogers, New Orleans group Tank and the Bangas, the Austin-based duo Black Pumas and Spanish singer Rosalía, who won album of the year at last week's Latin Grammys. Lizzo's road to the Grammys has been a long one:

song "Truth Hurts" topped the charts for seven weeks; she's wowed audiences with her live performances — including her twerking while playing the flute. She's also graced several magazine covers, earning praise for promoting body positivity and denouncing fat shaming.

But Lizzo has also had her fair share of critics: Some felt she shouldn't qualify for best new artist at the Grammys since she's been on the music scene for years. Others thought since "Truth Hurts" was originally released in 2017, it shouldn't qualify for the 2020 Grammys.

The Recording Academy said "Truth Hurts" qualified because the song was never submitted for contention in the Grammys process and it appears on an album released during the eligibility period for the upcoming show.

Associated Press

Botanists scour aging orchards for long-lost apple varieties

By **GILLIAN FLACCUS**

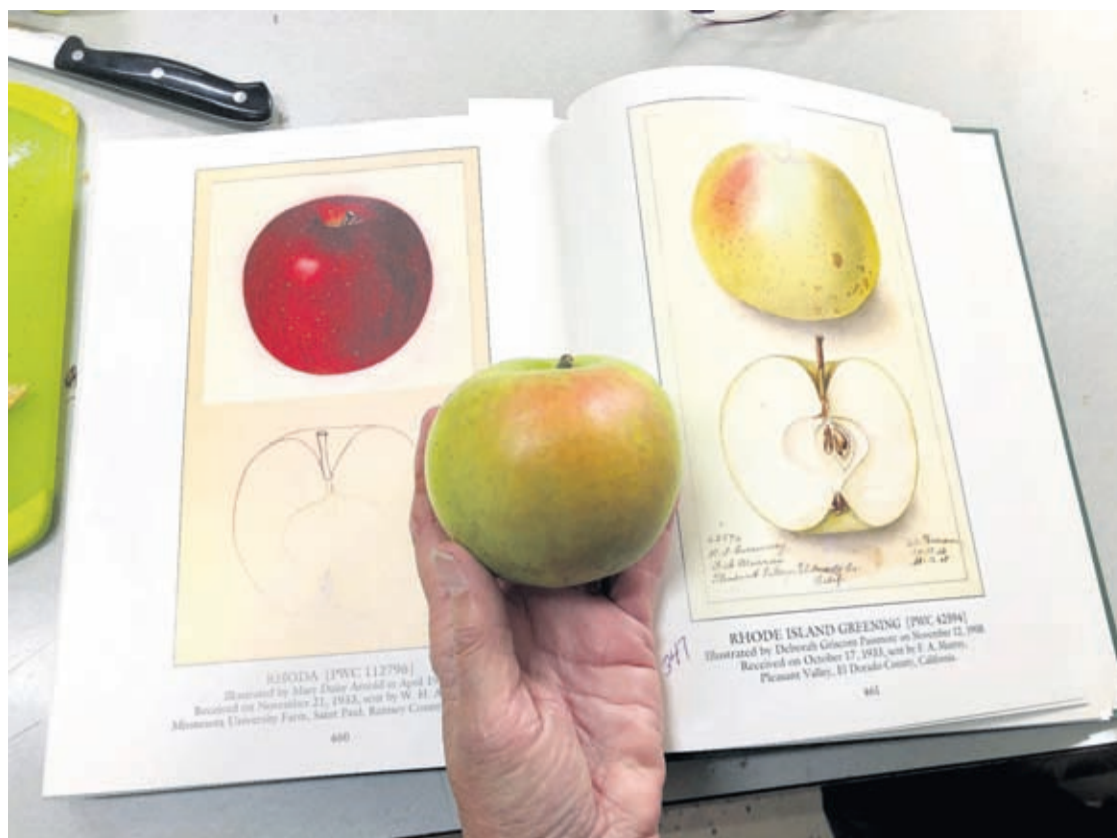
Associated Press

PULLMAN, Wash. (AP)—The apple tree stands alone near the top of a steep hill, wind whipping through its branches as a perfect sunset paints its leaves a vibrant gold.

It has been there for more than a century, and there is no hint that the tree or its apples are anything out of the ordinary. But this scraggly specimen produces the Arkansas Beauty, a so-called heritage fruit long believed to be extinct until amateur botanists in the Pacific Northwest tracked it down three years ago.

It's one of 13 long-lost apple varieties rediscovered by a pair of retirees in the remote canyons, wind-swept fields and hidden ravines of what was once the Oregon Territory. E.J. Brandt and David Benscoter, who together form the nonprofit Lost Apple Project, log countless hours and hundreds of miles in trucks, on all-terrain vehicles and on foot to find orchards planted by settlers as they pushed west more than a century ago. The two are racing against time to preserve a slice of homesteader history: The apple trees are old, and many are dying. Others are being ripped out for more wheat fields or housing developments for a growing population.

"To me, this area is a goldmine," said Brandt, who has found two lost varieties in the Idaho panhandle. "I don't want it lost in time. I want to give back to the people so that they can



In this Oct. 30, 2019, photo, Joanie Cooper, of the Temperate Orchard Conservancy, compares a rare apple to a 1908 watercolor illustration of the same variety in a U.S. Department of Agriculture book, as she works in her lab in Molalla, Oregon.

Associated Press

enjoy what our forefathers did." Brandt and Benscoter scour old county fair records, newspaper clippings and nursery sales ledgers to figure out which varieties existed in the area. Then they hunt them down, matching written records with old property maps, land deeds and sometimes the memories of the pioneers' great-grandchildren. They also get leads from people who live near old orchards.

The task is huge. North America once had 17,000 named varieties of domesticated apples, but only about 4,000 remain. The Lost Apple Project believes settlers planted a few hundred varieties in their cor-



In this Oct. 28, 2019, photo, apples are shown in an orchard at a remote homestead near Pullman, Wash.

Associated Press

ner of the Pacific Northwest alone. The Homestead Act of 1862 gave 160 acres (65 hectares) to families who would improve the land and pay a small fee, and these newcomers planted orchards with enough variety to get them through the long winter, with apples that ripened from early spring until the first frosts. Then, as now, trees planted for eating apples were not raised from seeds; cuttings taken from existing trees were grafted onto a generic root stock and raised to maturity. These cloned trees remove the genetic variation that often makes "wild" apples inedible — so-called "spitters."

Benscoter, who retired in 2006 after a career as an

FBI agent and an IRS criminal investigator, pursues leads on lost apples with the same zeal he applied to his criminal cases.

In one instance, he found county fair records that listed winners for every apple variety growing in Whitman County, Washington, from 1900 to 1910 — an invaluable treasure map. In another, he located a descendant of a homesteader with a gigantic orchard by finding a family history she posted online. Once he discovers a forgotten orchard, Benscoter spends hours mapping it. He has pages of diagrams with a tiny circle denoting each tree, with GPS coordinates alongside each dot. A lengthy computer data-

base lists apples including the Shackelford, the Flushing Spitzenburg and the Dickinson — all varieties rediscovered by the project. Apples from newly discovered trees are placed in a Ziploc baggie and carefully labeled with the tree's latitude and longitude and the date the fruit was collected. The apples are then shipped to the Temperate Orchard Conservancy more than 400 miles (640 kilometers) away in Molalla, Oregon, for identification. There, experts work to identify them using a trove of U.S. Agriculture Department watercolors and old textbooks. Once a variety is identified as "lost," the apple detectives return to the field to take cuttings that can be grafted onto root stock and planted in the conservancy's vast orchard, to be preserved for future generations.

The trees could eventually boost genetic diversity among modern-day apple crops as climate change and disease take an increasing toll, said Joanie Cooper, a botanist at the Temperate Orchard Conservancy who's helped identify many of the lost varieties found in northern Idaho and eastern Washington.

She and two others founded the nonprofit conservancy in 2011, and operate it on a shoestring, after recognizing the need for a repository for rare fruit trees in the U.S. West.

"You have to have varieties that can last, that can grow, produce fruit, survive the heat and maybe survive the cold winter, depending on where you are," Cooper said. "I think that's critical." For Benscoter and Brandt, however, the biggest joy comes in the hunt. Brandt, a Vietnam veteran and passionate historian, last year found a homestead near Troy, Idaho, by matching names on receipts from a nursery ledger with old property maps. Three wind-bent apple trees neatly spaced along the edge of a wheat field were all that remained of the orchard. □



In this Oct. 28, 2019, photo, amateur botanist David Benscoter, of The Lost Apple Project, examines an apple as he works in an orchard near Pullman, Wash.

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